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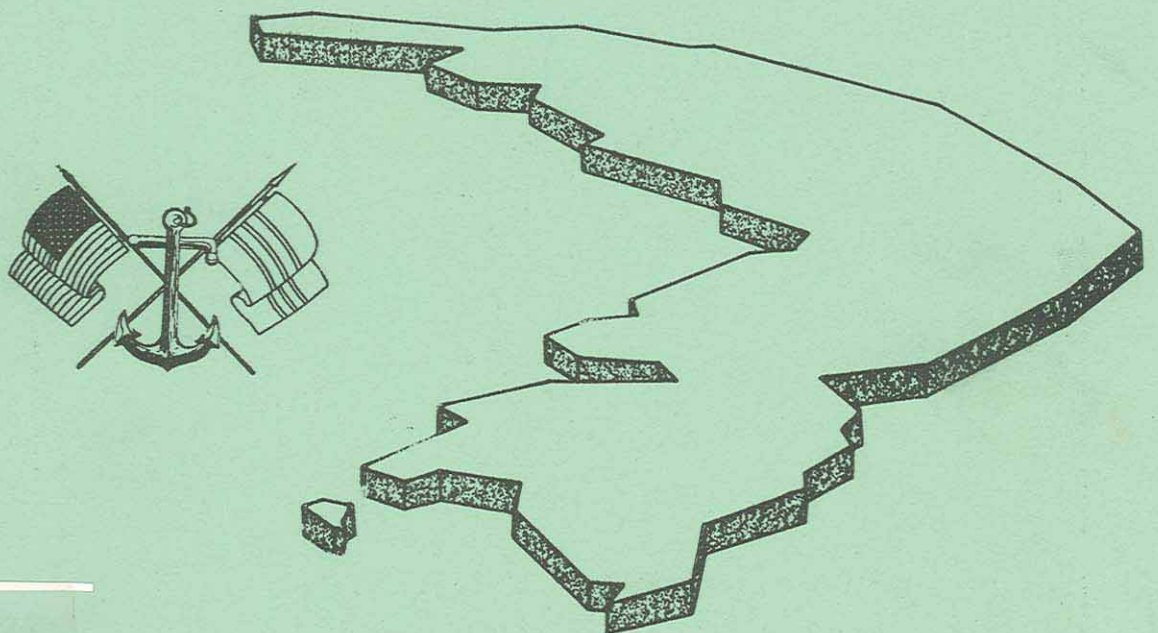

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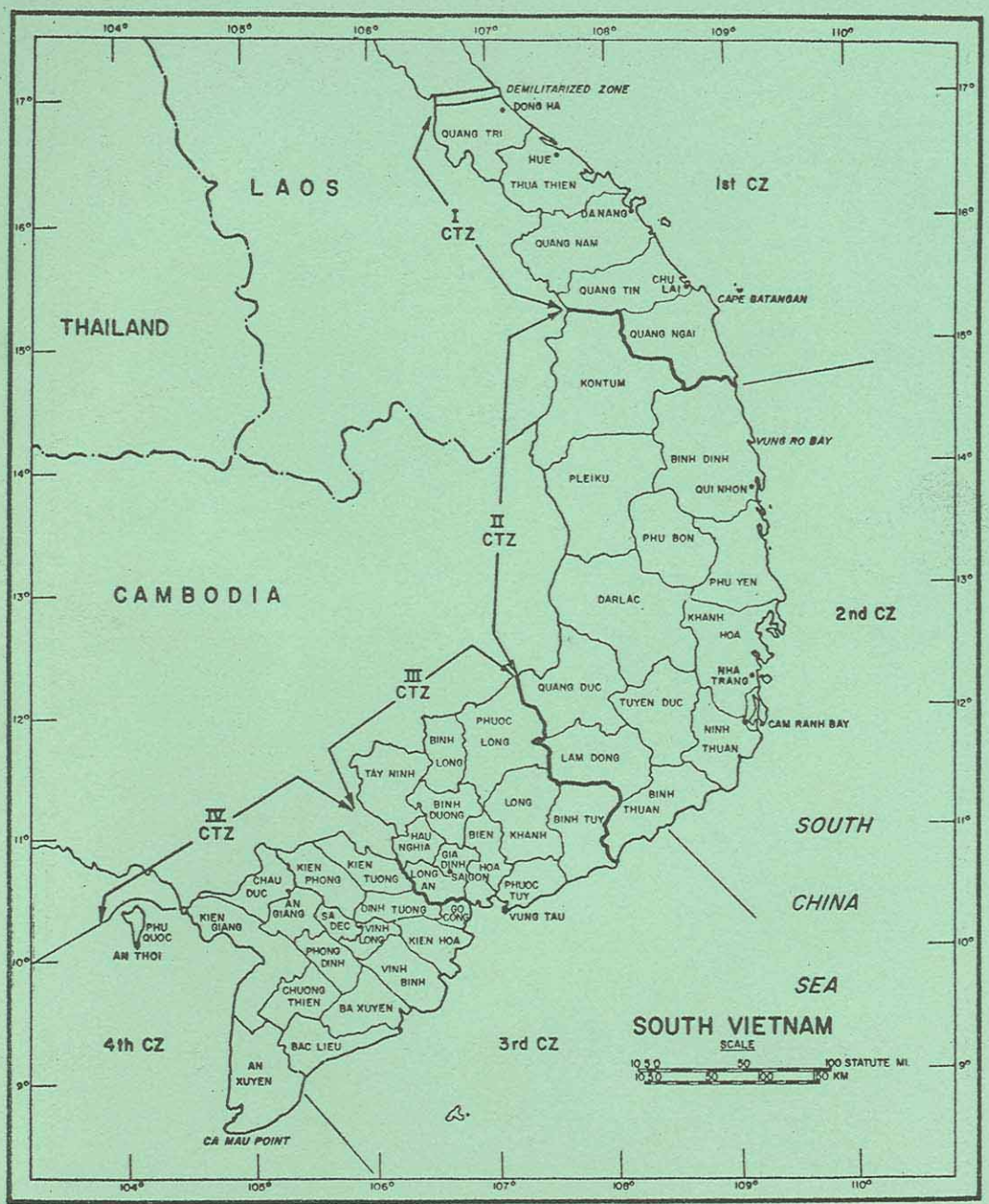

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FOREWORD

On 30 January the second Congressional Medal of Honor to be presented a Navyman for heroism in Vietnam was awarded posthumously to Seaman David G. OUELLET who sacrificed his life to save his shipmates in a Mekong Delta river battle. He was serving with River Section 532, part of the Navy's Operation GAME WARDEN anti-infiltration force in the Mekong waterway complex.

The citation describes OUELLET's actions:

> For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty serving with River Section 532, in combat against the enemy in the Republic of Vietnam. As the forward machine gunner on River Patrol Boat (PBR) 124, which was on patrol on the Mekong River during the early evening hours of 6 March 1967, Seaman OUELLET observed suspicious activity near the river bank, alerted his Boat Captain, and recommended movement of the boat to the area to investigate. While the PBR was making a high-speed run along the river bank, Seaman OUELLET spotted an incoming enemy grenade falling toward the boat. He immediately left the protected position of his gun mount and ran aft for the full length of the speeding boat, shouting to his fellow crewmembers to take cover, and pushed the Boat Captain down to safety. In the split second that followed the grenade's landing, and in the face of certain death, Seaman OUELLET fearlessly placed himself between the deadly missile and his shipmates, courageously absorbing most of the blast fragments with his own body in order to protect his shipmates from injury and death. His extraordinary heroism and his selfless and courageous action on behalf of his comrades at the expense of his own life were in the finest tradition of the United States Naval Service.

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CHRONOLOGY

1 Jan - Vietnamese Marines come in heavy contact with the Viet Cong 261st Main Force Battalion. Eighty-five Viet Cong are killed, eight captured and 71 weapons seized. Marines suffer 28 killed and 83 wounded. p. 131.

2 - The GAME WARDEN support base at Nha Be is attacked with 75-mm recoilless rifles. Two Navymen are wounded and MSB 22 is destroyed. p. 25.

- SEALs, accompanied by a Hoi Chanh, are landed about 12 miles southeast of Can Tho. A Viet Cong security element is discovered and six Viet Cong are killed in the ensuing fire fight. Two huts are destroyed along with 800 pounds of rice. p. 43.

3 - The task force organization of TF 116 is revised to effect a greater responsiveness and enhance the coordinating capability of the elements of the River Patrol Force. p. 52.

4 - Three PBRs are ambushed by a Viet Cong company on the Mang Thit river, 13 miles southeast of Vinh Long. One crewman is killed and three are wounded. Enemy casualties are unknown. p. 34.

8 - PBR 738 is ambushed and suffers a direct hit from a B-41 rocket. Eight Navymen and one civilian are wounded in the attack. p. 28.

- General Leonard F. CHAPMAN, Jr., Commandant, U. S. Marine Corps, visits the MRF at Dong Tam and is briefed on the riverine concept and plans for the MRF's expansion. p. 103.

9 - GAME WARDEN forces commence operations on the Hue River and surrounding areas in I Corps Tactical Zone for the second time. p. 24.

10 - A Coastal Group 43/44/45 reconnaissance team engages a Viet Cong platoon, killing 18 of the enemy and capturing two individual weapons. Three VNN sailors are killed. p. 120.

- "Seawolves" attack a high-level Viet Cong meeting near the mouth of the Ba Lai river. The helicopters kill 17 Viet Cong and wound 23. There are no friendly casualties. p. 42.

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10 Jan - Elements of TF 117 and the 2nd Brigade, U. S. NINTH Infantry Division, become heavily engaged with the Viet Cong 261st Main Force Battalion. At the end of the operation 21 U. S. Armymen are killed and 59 wounded. Viet Cong suffer 73 killed. p. 61.

11 - Following an ambush on a PBR patrol, SEALs are landed south of the ambush site and encounter an enemy bunker. In the following fire fight one SEAL is killed. Five Viet Cong are killed. p. 47.

16 - Operation CORONADO IX, which commenced on 2 November, is terminated. Cumulative results are 434 Viet Cong killed and 611 suspects detained; friendly forces suffer 76 killed and 374 wounded. p. 64.

18 - PBR 153 is ambushed by an estimated Viet Cong platoon armed with rockets, 57-mm recoilless rifles, automatic weapons and small arms. Four crewmen and one Vietnamese Maritime Policeman are wounded. Enemy casualties are unknown. p. 30.

- USCGC BERING STRAIT (WHEC 382) fires her 5-inch guns against an estimated enemy company 27 miles north of Ca Mau Point. Six Viet Cong are killed, four wounded and numerous structures and sampans are destroyed or damaged. p. 13.

19 - Operation AN DAN 16/68, conducted by RAG 27 units and the ARVN 50th Regiment along the Vam Co Dong river, 15 miles southwest of Saigon, results in 52 Viet Cong and one NVA soldier killed and two Viet Cong and 12 individual weapons captured. Three ARVN soldiers are killed, 25 wounded and five declared missing. p. 123.

20 - Viet Cong attempt to disrupt shipping on the Cua Viet River with a campaign of minings and ambushes. The campaign continues for several days and results in one LCM-8 sunk, eight other boats damaged, two U. S. Navymen killed and 18 wounded. p. 75.

- Coastal Group 11 junks support Dai Loc hamlet during an attack on the hamlet by an estimated four companies of Viet Cong. Coastal Group sailors and U. S. Marines engage the enemy and kill 30 Viet Cong. Friendly casualties consist of four VNN sailors killed and 18 wounded, including two U. S. advisors. p. 111.

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24 Jan - PCF 10, supporting a joint U. S./Vietnamese amphibious operation, conducts a gunfire mission against a Viet Cong company on Phu Quoc Island. An estimated 15 Viet Cong are killed and four bunkers and three houses are destroyed. p. 13.

29 - PCF 62 attempts to stop an evading sampan, eight miles south of Qui Nhon. Three grenades are thrown into the Swift boat from the sampan, wounding the Officer in Charge and one other crewman. PCF 62 destroys the sampan with .50 caliber machine gun fire and kills the occupants (probable). p. 7.

31 - Seabees suffer three men killed and 47 wounded from enemy attacks and booby traps during the month. p. 91.

- A Cam Ranh Bay STABLE DOOR patrol surfaces and captures a Viet Cong swimmer. The incident marks the first time in STABLE DOOR history that an enemy swimmer has been captured. p. 19.

- NAVSUPPACT Danang personnel set 16 new monthly tonnage records despite numerous hostile fire incidents and enemy attacks. p. 73.

- GAME WARDEN forces come to the aid of Chau Doc, the capital of Chau Doc Province, after the city is attacked by an estimated 1,400 Viet Cong. During the heavy fighting which followed throughout the day one U. S. sailor is killed and four are wounded. At least 20 Viet Cong are killed. p. 48.

- A 13-man Viet Cong "Sapper" squad assaults the VNN headquarters building in Saigon. Ten of the Viet Cong are killed and two captured. p. 107.

Total number of U. S. Navy personnel under the operational control of NAVFORV stands at 27,840. In addition, U. S. Navy personnel assigned to III Marine Amphibious Force number 3,589; Coast Guard numerical strength is 456.

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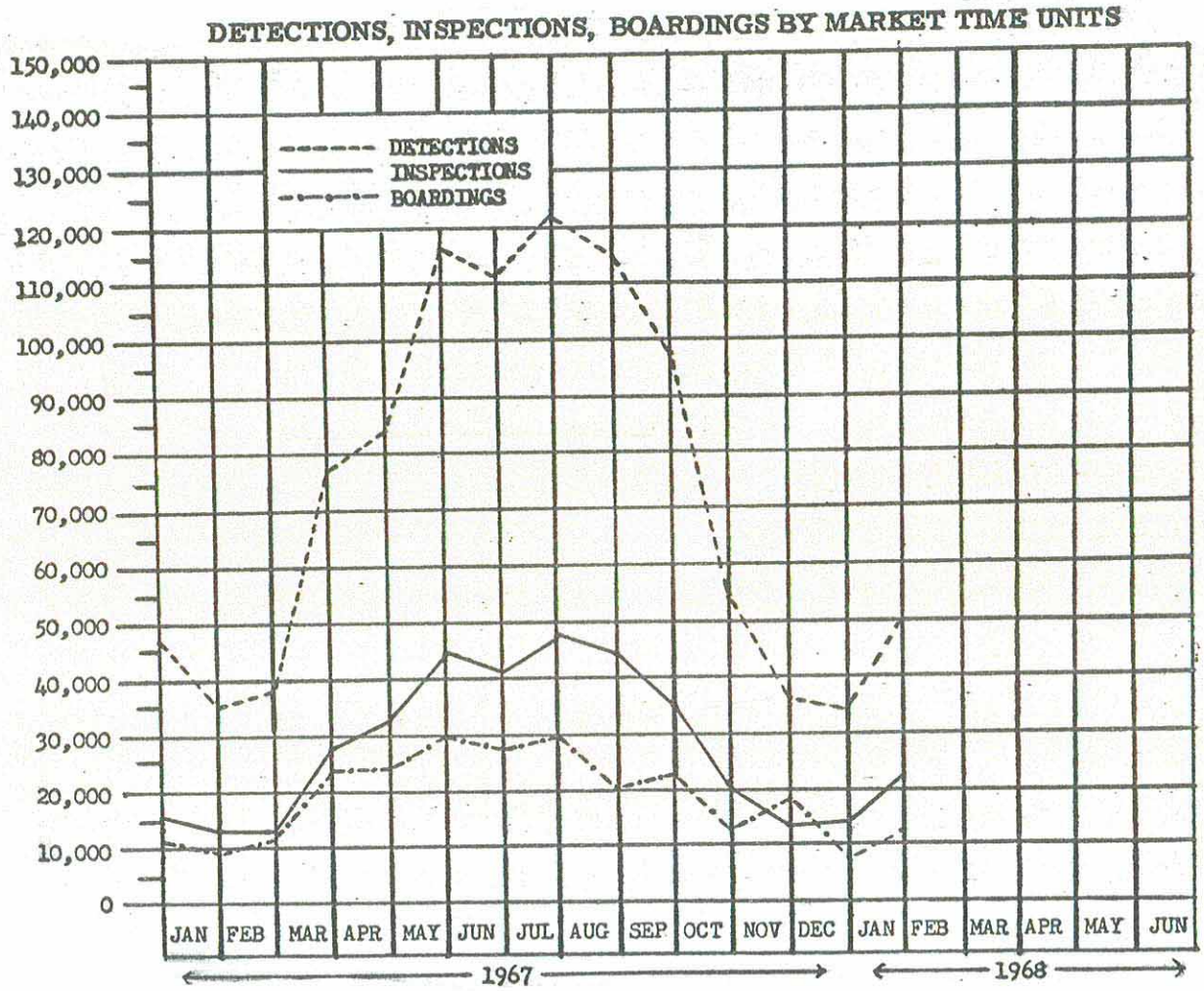

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incidents during the month. The majority of the gunfire support missions were fired in the Third and Fourth Coastal Zones where fair weather prevailed throughout the month.

First Coastal Zone

Although the weather in the northern areas of the First Coastal Zone was unpredictable during January, routine MARKET TIME activitiy increased as the zone's patrol units detected 15,804 junks and sampans during the month, an increase of over 7,000 from December's total. More than 6,700 of the detected craft were inspected and over 3,700 were boarded.

On 2 January, while investigating a suspicious junk approximately 19 miles north of Danang, PCF 99 was fired upon from the beach. The Swift boat returned the fire immediately and, when permission was granted, also destroyed the junk. No friendly personnel casualties resulted from the fire fight.

On the 22nd PCF 55 provided immediate naval gunfire assistance to the Vietnamese Navy's Coastal Group 14, which was receiving heavy harassment fire approximately 13 miles southeast of Danang on the coast of the South China Sea. After suppressing the enemy fire with .50 caliber machine gun fire, the Swift boat resumed her normal patrol.

On the 31st two males in a sampan attempted to evade as PCF 19 approached to inspect the craft. As the occupants beached their

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COASTAL SURVEILLANCE FORCE (TASK FORCE 115)

During January Coastal Surveillance Force activity increased as units of Operation MARKET TIME and Operation STABLE DOOR detected 93,376 craft along South Vietnam's coastline and harbors; 25,086 of these craft were inspected and 14,997 were boarded. The boardings resulted in the detention of 53 craft and 438 persons.

In response to the heavy fighting which erupted throughout Vietnam during the last days of the month, coastal surveillance forces continually aided allied forces with gunfire support, and all units maintained alert and aggressive patrols.

OPERATION MARKET TIME

During January there was an increase in Operation MARKET TIME activity as the heavy seas and inclement weather associated with the northeast monsoon season abated in the northern coastal zone, thus allowing all MARKET TIME stations to be manned throughout a high percentage of the month. MARKET TIME units detected 48,856 junks and sampans during the month, an increase of 14,265 over December's total. Over 40 percent of the detected craft were inspected and over 20 percent were boarded. The boardings resulted in the detention of 43 craft and 338 persons. In addition, 1,500 steel-hulled craft were detected transitting MARKET TIME areas. Meanwhile, MARKET TIME units supported four ground operations, conducted 152 naval gunfire support missions and were engaged in 18 hostile fire

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craft they were captured by members of the U. S. Marines' 5th Platoon, B Company, 3rd Shore Party Battalion. The Swift boat stood by 200 yards from the beach and contacted the Marines who later turned the detainees over to the Vietnamese Navy's Coastal Group 12 for further investigation.

First Coastal Zone units participated in three SAR operations during January. On the 17th PCF 27 was called upon to search for a helicopter which had reportedly crashed approximately 11 miles north-northeast of Danang. Slightly more than an hour after commencing the search the Swift boat sighted a light on the beach. A nearby Marine unit was directed to the scene and found two survivors out of a crew of four. PCF 27 continued to provide illumination for the search until relieved by PCF 16. PCF 16 was joined by USS FORTIFY (MSO 446) and the two units continued the search with negative results, although some debris and an oil slick were found.

On 20 January PCF 20 received a report of a downed helicopter approximately six miles north of Chu Lai. The Swift boat, aided by helicopters, recovered three of the four crewmembers, and the PCF located the wreckage and provided cover for divers who recovered the ammunition from the downed helicopter.

On the 27th the Coast Guard cutters POINT GLOVER and POINT WELCOME aided in the search for a man overboard from the USS VALLEY

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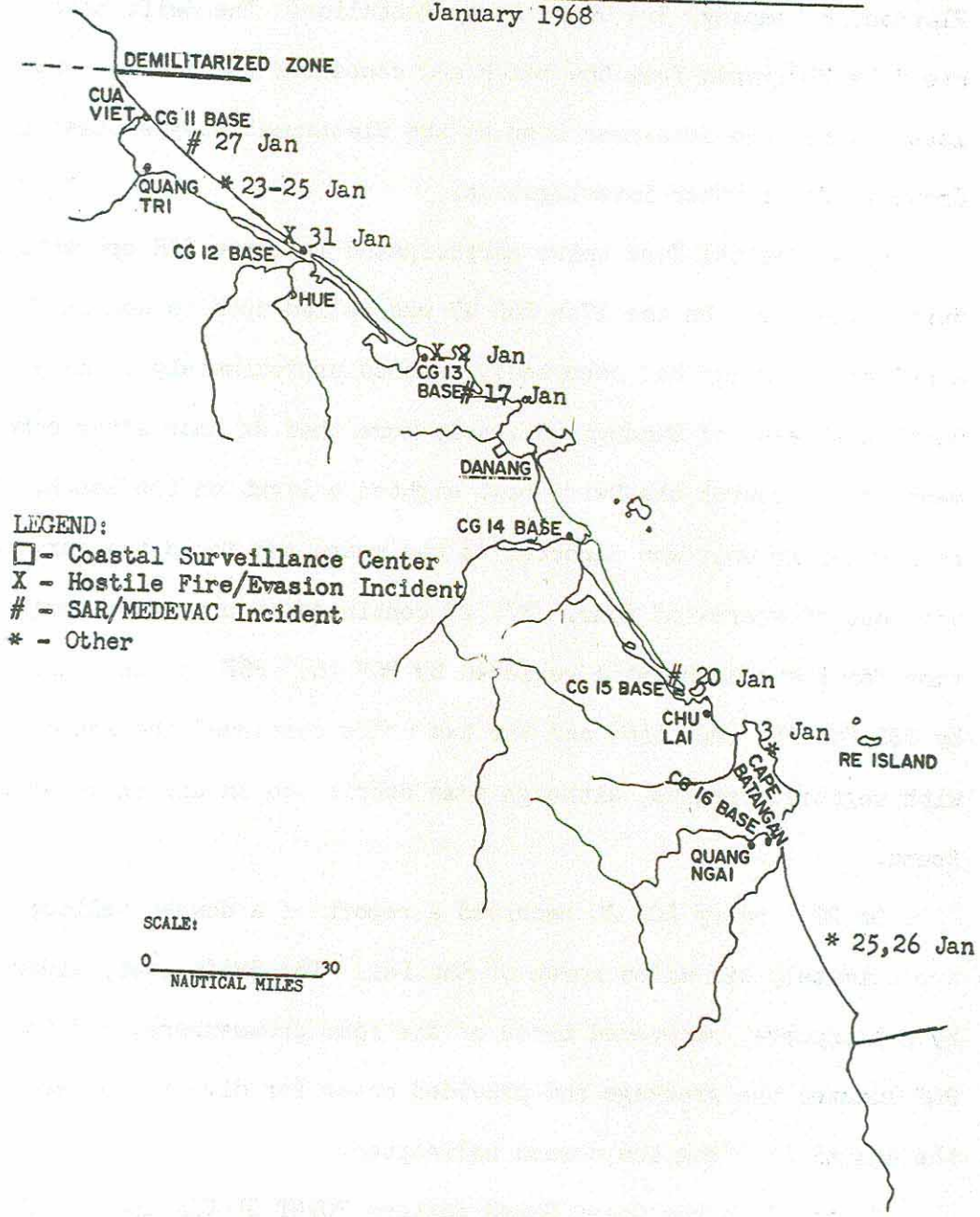
OPERATIONS IN THE FIRST COASTAL ZONE
January 1968



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FORGE (LPH 8) approximately 52 miles northwest of Danang. The search was terminated with negative results.

MARKET TIME units from the First Coastal Zone also supported three ground operations during the month. On the 3rd PCFs 15 and 57 provided blocking services against possible enemy exfiltration in an area approximately six miles northwest of Cape Batangan in support of Operation MUSCATINE, a joint U. S. Army/Vietnames Army operation.

From the 23rd through the 25th, USCGC POINT ARDEN and a PCF provided anti-infiltration/exfiltration services in support of Operation BADGER CATCH, which took place along the coast of Quang Tri province.

On the 25th and 26th the Coast Guard cutter POINT YOUNG provided blocking services for a sweep by elements of the U. S. Army's 11th Infantry approximately 21 miles southeast of Cape Batangan.

Second Coastal Zone

During January coastal junk and sampan traffic also increased in the Second Coastal Zone as 19,885 craft were detected, an increase of more than 7,000 from December's figure. More than 9,500 of the detected craft were inspected and over 3,700 were boarded.

On 8 January, in response to a request from sector authorities, PCF 63 took a deserted village approximately 22 miles south of Qui Nhon under fire after seeing four Viet Cong flee into the

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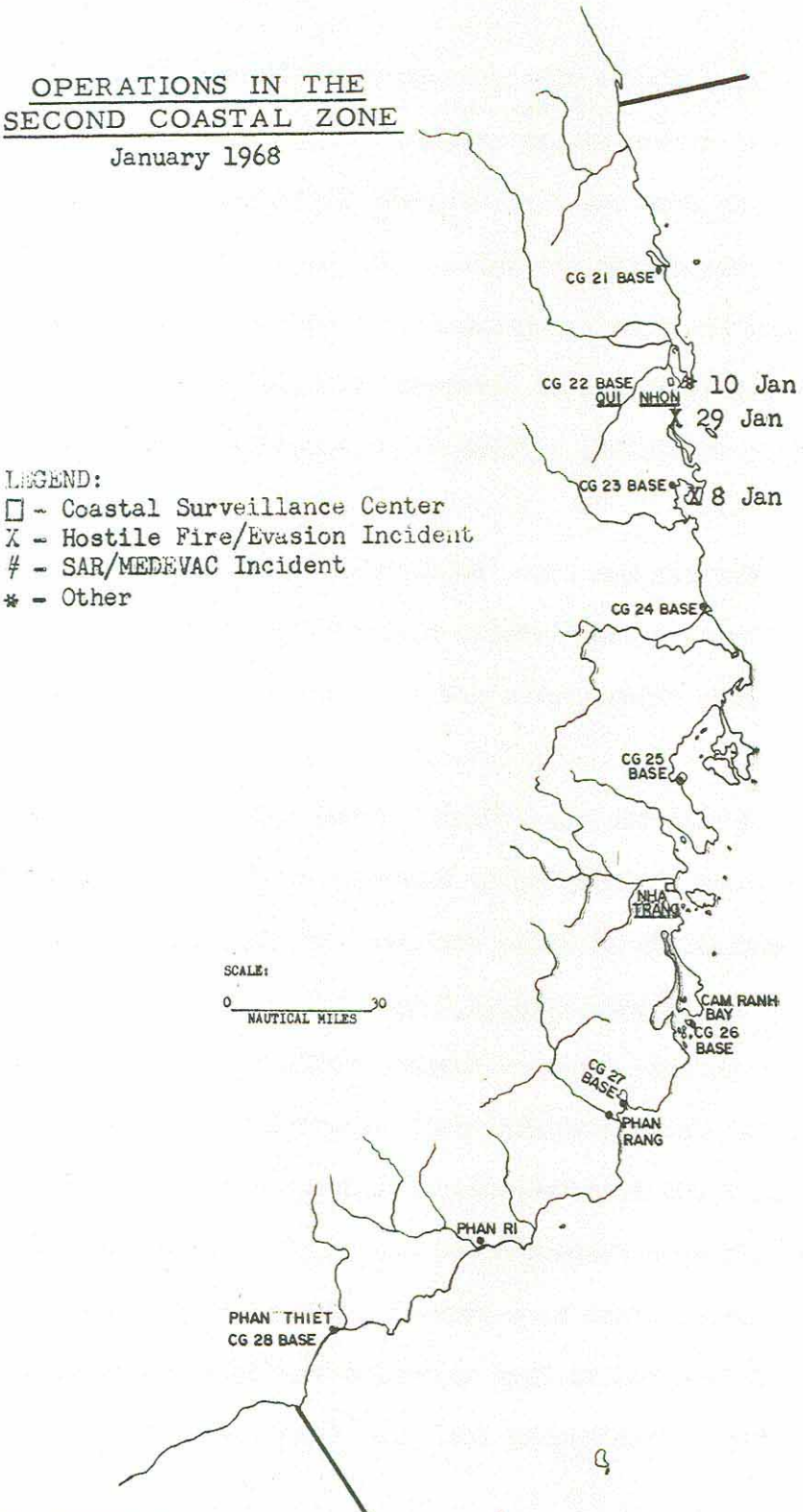
OPERATIONS IN THE SECOND COASTAL ZONE

January 1968



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village. The Swift boat destroyed the large building which the evading personnel were seen to enter, as well as four additional surrounding structures.

On the 29th PCF 62, on a routine MARKET TIME patrol along the coast of Binh Dinh province, eight miles south of Qui Nhon, sighted an unlighted sampan heading toward the beach. The Swift boat illuminated the sampan and one man was observed manning the tiller. As the Swift boat drew closer to the sampan five or six persons in green and khaki uniforms were observed lying in the bottom of the craft. The sampan failed to heed the signals from the Swift to stop, and as the patrol boat drew still closer, one of the sampan's occupants arose and threw a grenade which exploded on the forecastle of the PCF, wounding the Officer in Charge. Two more grenades were thrown, one bouncing down into the Swift boat's cabin and the other landing on the starboard side main deck, wounding another crewman. The Swift then opened up on the enemy with .50 caliber machine gun fire, destroyed the sampan and killed the occupants (probable). Although moderately damaged, PCF 62 proceeded to Qui Nhon under her own power after being relieved on station by another Swift boat.

A Second Coastal Zone PCF provided blocking services in support of ARVN and Korean units approximately four miles east of Qui Nhon on 10 January.

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Third Coastal Zone

The aggregate of junk and sampan traffic remained low in the Third Coastal Zone during January as only 4,261 craft were detected, approximately the same number that were detected during December. Over 2,200 of the detected craft were inspected and over 1,200 were boarded. The Zone's PCFs were occasionally forced to seek less areas to escape heavy winds and seas during the month.

Although routine coastal craft detections were low, Third Coastal Zone units were kept busy during the month as they responded to numerous requests for naval gunfire support and engaged in several hostile fire incidents.

On 4 January PCF 98 received hostile fire while conducting a training exercise approximately 125 miles southwest of Saigon. The Swift boat returned and suppressed the enemy fire, and, as a result, destroyed three sampans, three bunkers and numerous huts and fish nets.

On the 13th, PCF 24 received hostile fire from the beach approximately 43 miles south of Saigon while on a routine patrol. The PCF returned and suppressed the enemy fire, and, in so doing extensively damaged one structure.

On the 14th, in response to a request from sector authorities, PCF 98 conducted a firing mission on enemy bunker concentrations approximately 125 miles southwest of Saigon. As a result of the

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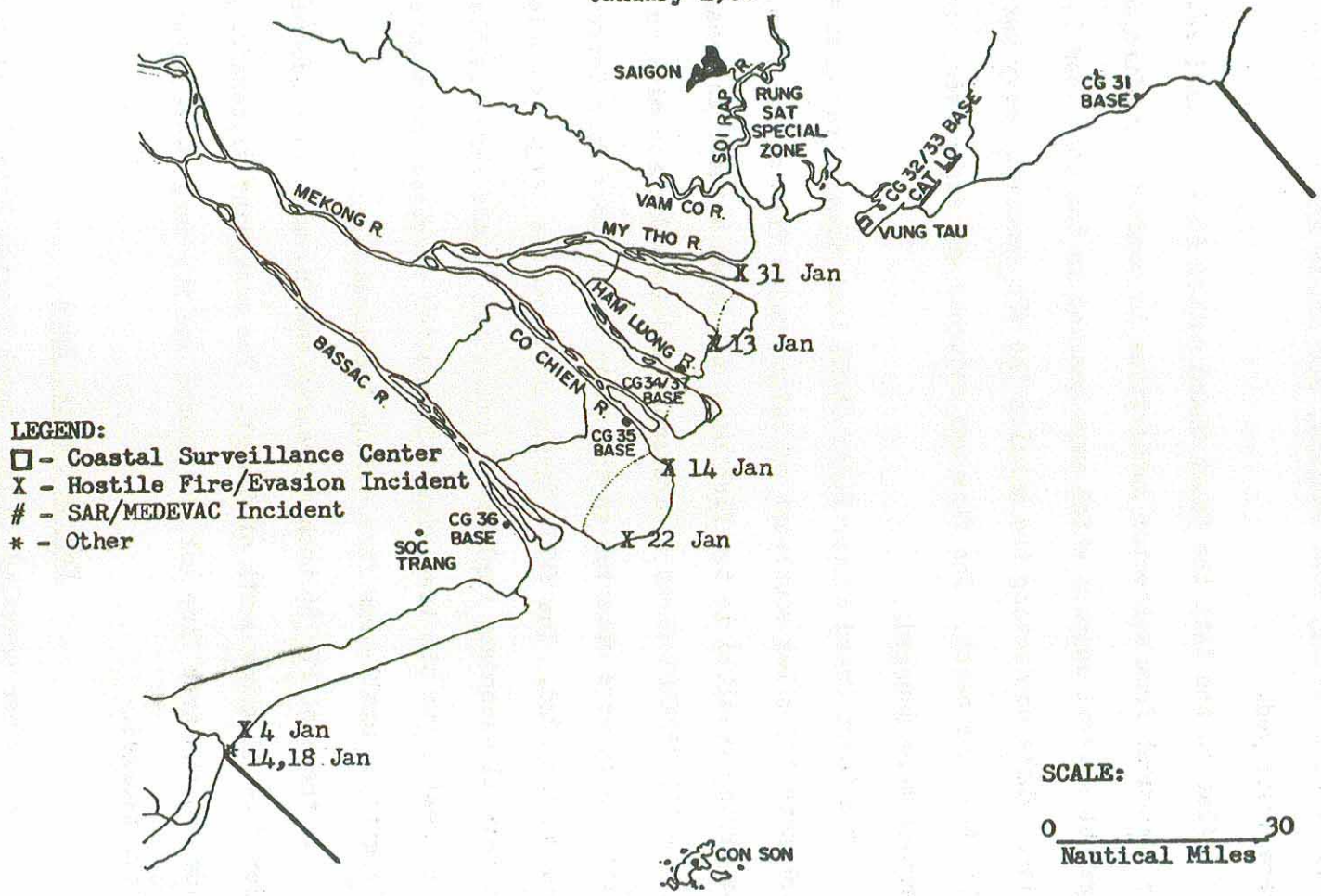
OPERATIONS IN THE THIRD COASTAL ZONE

January 1968



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Swift boat's firing, four sampans, one bunker and four structures were destroyed.

Also on the 14th the Coast Guard cutter POINT KENNEDY responded to a request from subsector authorities to conduct a gunfire mission against several sampans which were beached in the Long Toan Secret Zone. While conducting the mission the WPB received heavy hostile fire from the beach. The fire was returned and suppressed, and two sampans were damaged.

The Coast Guard cutter POINT GRACE took enemy structures and fish nets 125 miles southwest of Saigon under fire on the 18th. The firing resulted in two fish nets and three structures damaged.

POINT KENNEDY fired a harassment and interdiction mission on lights which were observed on the beach in the Long Toan Secret Zone on the 22nd. The WPB's firing produced one large explosion and several secondary explosions from which flames were visible 40 to 60 feet above the tree line. The cutter received and suppressed intermittent small-arms fire during the mission.

On the 31st PCF 36 took a beached sampan, with four occupants, under fire 32 miles south of Saigon. The occupants successfully evaded to the tree line but the sampan and its cargo were extensively damaged.

Fourth Coastal Zone

Fair weather prevaled in the Fourth Coastal Zone during the

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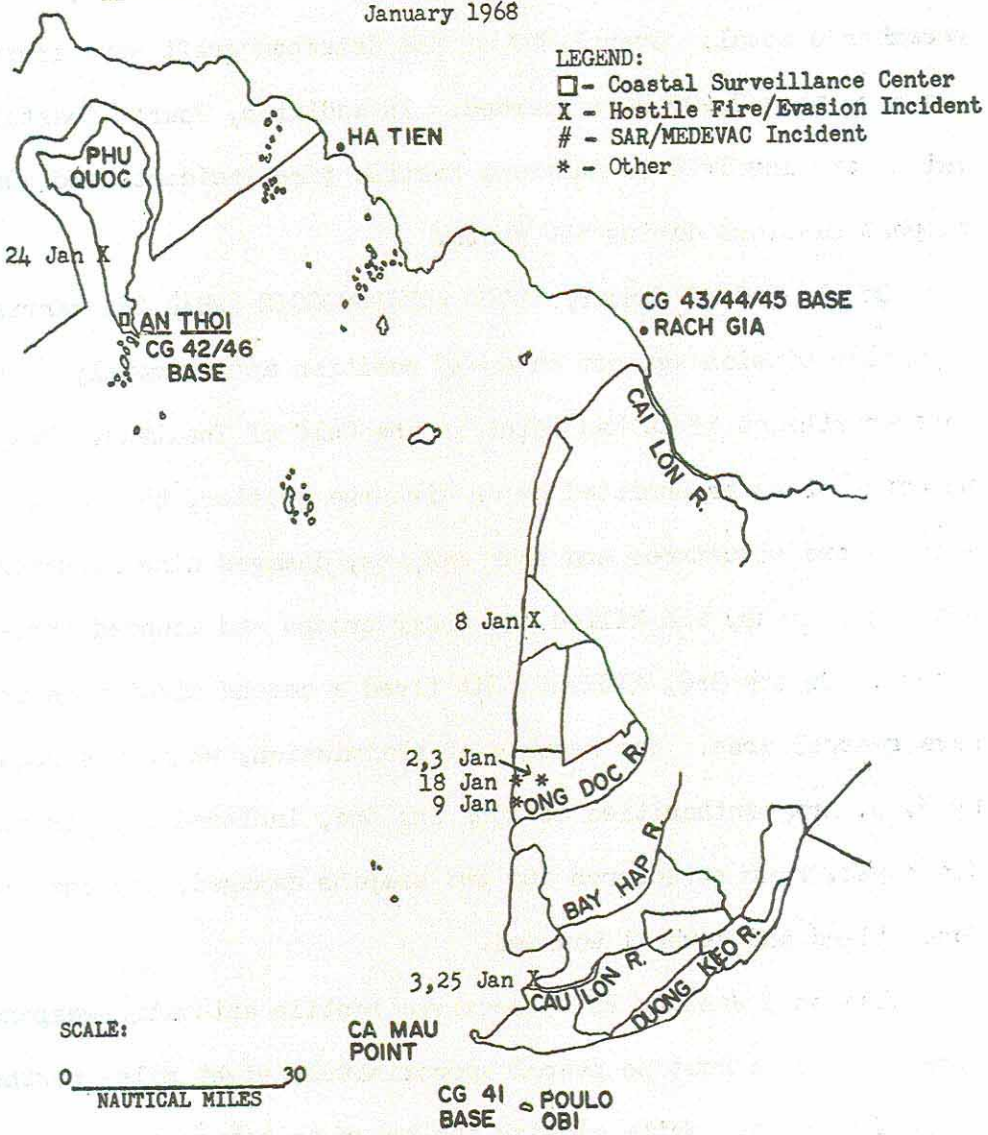
OPERATIONS IN THE FOURTH COASTAL ZONE

January 1968



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month of January, thus allowing MARKET TIME units to remain particularly active. The Zone's patrol units detected 9,001 junks and sampans during the month, an increase of approximately 1,100 from December's total. Over 2,800 of the detected craft were inspected and more than 2,400 were boarded. In addition, Fourth Coastal Zone units were involved in numerous hostile fire incidents and gunfire support missions during the month.

On the 2nd of January USCGC ANDROSCOGGIN (WHEC 68) carried out a gunfire mission against an enemy position approximately 30 miles north-northeast of Ca Mau Point in the Gulf of Thailand. Responding to corrections transmitted by an airborne spotter, the cutter destroyed two structures and four sampans, damaged nine structures and six sampans, and killed two enemy troops and wounded three others. On the 3rd, ANDROSCOGGIN fired a second mission on the same general area. The results of the mission, which was requested by U. S. Army authorities at Song Ong Doc, included two structures destroyed, four structures and two sampans damaged, and one Viet Cong killed and several wounded.

Also on 3 January PCF 9 received hostile automatic-weapons fire while on a routine patrol approximately eight miles northeast of Ca Mau Point. While closing the beach to return and suppress the fire, one U. S. Navy crewman suffered a bullet wound in the right thigh. The hostile fire was suppressed and the Swift boat's

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guns killed one Viet Cong and wounded several others.

On the 8th, while closing the beach to investigate a suspicious sampan, PCF 6 received hostile small-arms fire from the tree line approximately 49 miles north of Ca Mau Point. The Swift boat returned and suppressed the fire and destroyed the sampan.

In response to a request from U. S. Army authorities at Song Ong Doc, PCF 50 fired on a suspected enemy troop concentration 25 miles north of Ca Mau Point on 9 January. As a result of the firing, one Viet Cong was killed and three were wounded.

On 18 January USCGC BERING STRAIT (WHEC 382) fired her 5-inch guns on an estimated enemy company 27 miles north of Ca Mau Point. As a result of the cutter's firing, two structures and one sampan were destroyed, six structures were damaged, six Viet Cong were killed and four were wounded.

On 24 January, in support of a joint U. S./Vietnamese amphibious operation, PCF 10 conducted a gunfire mission against a reported Viet Cong company on the central west coast of Phu Quoc Island in the Gulf of Thailand. Four bunkers and three houses were destroyed and an estimated 15 Viet Cong were killed as a result of the Swift boat's firing.

PCF 94 was directed to investigate suspicious sampan activity eight miles northeast of Ca Mau Point on 25 January. As the Swift closed to investigate, small-arms fire was received and suppressed.

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One sampan was beached and the three occupants attempted to evade by burying themselves in the mud. The three Viet Cong were killed after all efforts to effect their surrender failed.

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MARKET TIME UNITS

During the month of January the Vietnamese Navy had an average of eight PGMs, two PCEs, and one MSC assigned daily to MARKET TIME forces.

The crew of a Navy Neptune SP2H patrol plane prepare to board their craft for a MARKET TIME aerial surveillance patrol.

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At month's end aircraft from three patrol squadrons were providing air surveillance for Operation MARKET TIME. A detachment of Patrol Squadron TWO (VP 2) flew SP-2H Neptunes from Tan Son Nhut Air Base in Saigon and a detachment of VP 17 flew Neptunes from Cam Ranh Bay. Meanwhile, a detachment of VP 26 flew P-3B Orions from U-Tapao, Thailand.

The bow observer of an SP2H Neptune patrol plane studies the markings of a cargo ship during a routine MARKET TIME aerial surveillance flight off the coast of South Vietnam.

Throughout the month the following U. S. SEVENTH Fleet ships operated as MARKET TIME units during the indicated inclusive dates:

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		Dates
DER 251	USS CAMP	10-31
DER 324	USS FALGOUT	17-31
DER 400	USS HISSEM	1-10
DER 325	USS LOWE	1-26
LST 819	USS HAMPSHIRE COUNTY	1-12
LST 1146	USS SUMMIT COUNTY	10-31
MSC 207	USS WHIPPOORWILL	12-31
MSO 426	USS CONFLICT	1-12, 30-31
MSO 432	USS DYNAMIC	12-30
MSO 435	USS ENDURANCE	1-12, 30-31
MSO 433	USS ENGAGE	12-20
MSO 446	USS FORTIFY	20-30
MSO 456	USS INFLICT	12-30
MSO 449	USS IMPERVIOUS	12-30
MSO 455	USS IMPLICIT	1-12, 30-31
MSO 491	USS PERSISTENT	1-12, 30-31
MSO 209	USS WOODPECKER	1-12
PG 84	USS ASHEVILLE	1-7, 7-31
PG 85	USS GALLUP	1-7, 7-31
WHEC 68	USCGC ANDROSCOGGIN	1-4
WHEC 382	USCGC BERING STRAIT	24-31
WHEC 32	USCGC CAMPBELL	8-28
WHEC 33	USCGC DUANE	1-8, 25-31
WHEC 387	USCGC GRESHAM	1-17
WHEC 67	USCGC MINNETONKA	28-31

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MARKET TIME STATISTICAL SUMMARY
January 1968

1. U. S. Ships/Craft:

	DER	MSO	MSC	WPB	PCF	PG	LST	WHEC
Daily average number of craft on patrol	2	4	1	14	32	2	1	3

2. U. S. Activity:

TOTAL DETECTED	WOOD - DAY	31,693	NIGHT 17,163		
	STEEL - DAY	759	NIGHT 741		50,356
TOTAL INSPECTED	WOOD - DAY	13,528	NIGHT 6,698		
	STEEL - DAY	501	NIGHT 493		21,220

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TOTAL BOARDED	WOOD - DAY	8,140	NIGHT	3,171	11,385
	STEEL - DAY	54	NIGHT	20	
TOTAL DETAINED	JUNKS	43	PEOPLE	338	

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OPERATION STABLE DOOR

During January Operation STABLE DOOR patrols detected 43,020 junks and sampans; 3,866 of these were inspected and 3,612 were boarded.

A U. S. Navy "Boston Whaler" Skimmer speeds across the waters of an inner harbor on an Operation STABLE DOOR (Harbor Defense) patrol.

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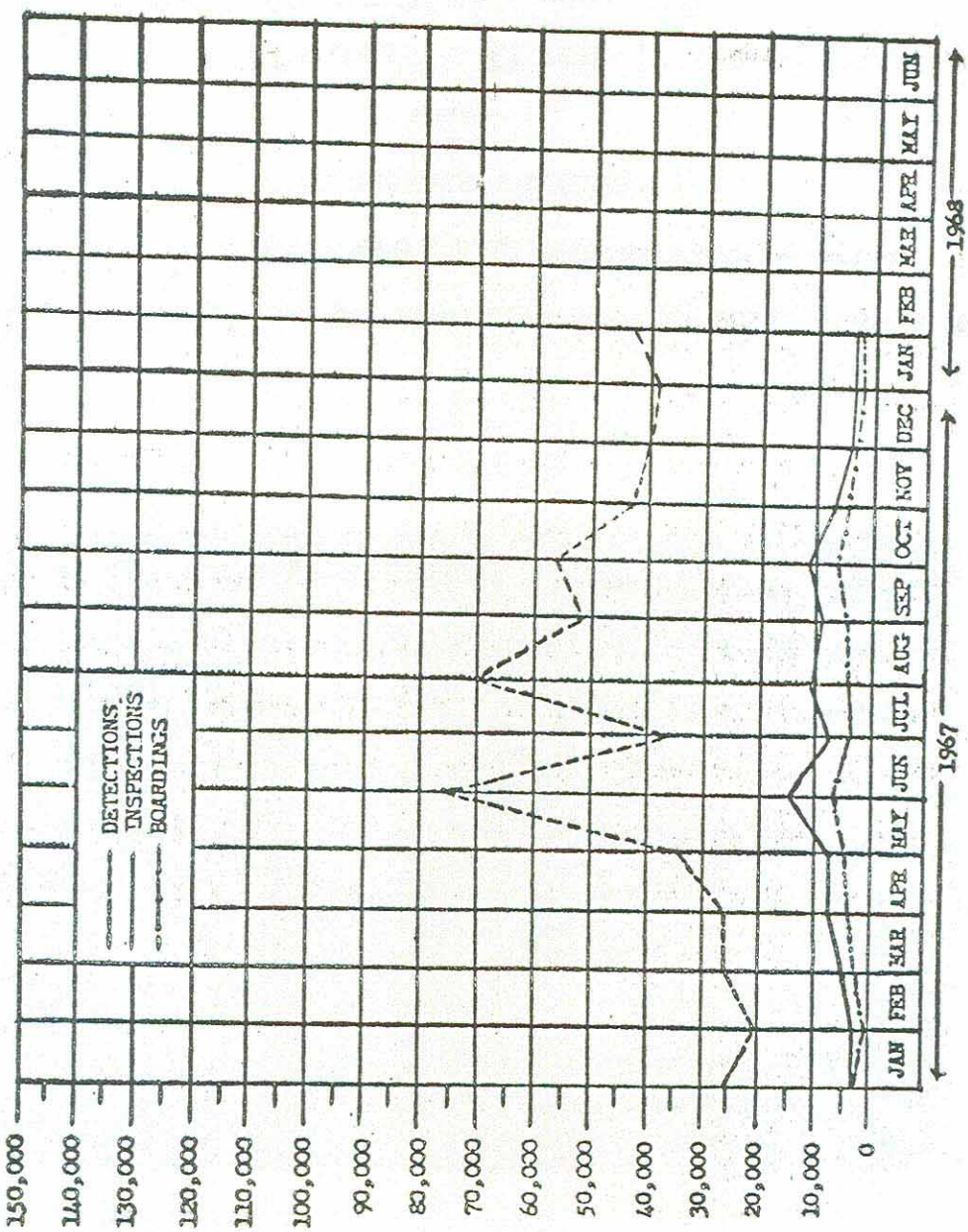

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At 0250 on 31 January a Cam Ranh Bay STABLE DOOR patrol succeeded in surfacing an enemy swimmer through the use of routine offensive grenade drops in the vicinity of the Norwegian tanker SS PELICAN. This was the first time in STABLE DOOR history that a swimmer had been captured. Approximately one-half hour later, while the captured swimmer was being questioned, an explosion occurred on the bow of the SS PELICAN, causing moderate damage. Initial interrogation of the swimmer indicated that additional swimmers were in the Cam Ranh Bay area operating as three-man teams.

Inshore Undersea Warfare Unit ONE (IUWU 1) continued operations in Vung Tau, detaining 13 persons and five craft during the month for improper identification, curfew violations and suspicious actions.

At Cam Ranh Bay, IUWU 2 detained 48 persons and one junk during January.

IUWU 3 at Qui Nhon expended many hours of patrol effort during the month providing a blocking force for numerous scheduled land sweeps of the surrounding area.

During the month one officer and five enlisted men arrived at Vung Ro Bay to conduct advance planning and liaison with local U. S. Army commands in preparation for establishing a STABLE DOOR

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unit at Vung Ro. The permanently assigned personnel for this unit were expected to arrive in-country about 1 March 1968.

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RIVER PATROL FORCE (TASK FORCE 116)

The New Year's truce period of 311800H December to 020600H January was violated early on the morning of 2 January when the Viet Cong initiated an attack against the PBR and minesweeper support base at Nha Be. One minesweeper was destroyed and two Navymen were wounded in the attack. As the PBRs continued to interdict enemy river crossings, the Viet Cong retaliated with intensified firepower, employing heavier weapons. Although GAME WARDEN units were engaged in only 61 fire fights with the communist insurgents they suffered their highest monthly casualty total to date--one killed and 82 wounded. In greater evidence was the increased use of rocket, rifle-grenade, recoilless-rifle and heavy automatic-weapons fire from ambushes in an attempt to destroy the patrol boats. The increased B-40 and B-41 rocket attacks alone killed one PBR sailor and wounded 36 others, in addition to one Department of the Navy civilian, as the Viet Cong scored hits on the patrol boats. However, the enemy suffered greater losses--120 killed, 36 wounded and 51 captured--as Operation GAME WARDEN continued to deny the Viet Cong the free use of the waterways of the Mekong Delta and the Rung Sat Special Zone.

In I Corps Tactical Zone, PBR operations commenced on 9 January for the second time.

On 10 January a Viet Cong swimmer, wearing sophisticated

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diving equipment, was detected on the upper Co Chien river. This was the first sighting in IV Corps Tactical Zone of a swimmer so equipped.

During the month Operation PREAKNESS III was conducted along the Ba Lai River and Operation WIND SONG I was conducted in the Thom Creek/Mo Cay Creek area, in the vicinity of Mo Cay in Kien Hoa province. Both operations achieved a high degree of success in the destruction of enemy assets and the capture of Viet Cong suspects and documents of high intelligence value.

Viet Cong prisoners crowd the stern of a Mobile Riverine Force Monitor after they were captured during Operation WIND SONG I, a combined 116/117 operation near Mo Cay in Kien Hoa province.

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During the Tet holiday period BOLD DRAGON I was conducted on the upper Bassac River. On 29 January PBRs commenced patrols from Chau Doc to the Cambodian border to counter any possible Viet Cong movement or resupply efforts during the Tet truce period that was declared from 291800H to 310600H. The truce was terminated, however, at 0945 on 30 January, due to numerous Viet Cong-initiated attacks throughout South Vietnam. The intended major effort of the enemy was fully manifested when the massive Tet Offensive was launched in the early morning hours of the 31st against cities and military installations throughout the Republic.

Task Force 116 units played a prominent role in the defense of several cities that came under attack during the major Viet Cong Tet Offensive. At My Tho SEAL and PBR personnel augmented the defense of U. S. billeting areas in the city. PBRs attacked Viet Cong infiltrators from the waterways adjacent to My Tho and Ben Tre. Light helicopter fire teams from Task Units 116.3.8 and 116.3.9 supported My Tho and Ben Tre almost continuously. Vinh Long was the scene of heavy fighting, during which GAME WARDEN units were confronted by the advancing enemy. Navy "Seawolves" from Task Unit 116.2.9 flew extensive missions in support of Vinh Long Airfield and the surrounding area. Around Sa Dec PBRs maintained a blocking force as ground units counter-attacked the Viet Cong to expel them from the city. In Chau Doc four PBRs from River Section 535, five

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PBRs from River Section 513 and SEALs from Detachment Alfa, Eighth Platoon, contributed significantly to saving the city from seizure by the communist insurgents. The SEALs waged intense combat within the city against the Viet Cong, while PBRs attacked enemy positions and evacuated civilians and wounded personnel. PBR crews went ashore four time to secure helicopter landing zones and further joined SEAL personnel to assist in the base defense at the U. S. Special Forces Camp. In the Saigon area armed helicopters from Task Unit 116.4.8 operated from Nha Be in support of U. S. elements at the U. S. Embassy and Tan Son Nhut Air Base, including BOQ-3 near the air base that had been broached by the Viet Cong. In I Corps PBRs participated in the defense of the strategic LCU ramp at Hue. Casualties to Task Force 116 personnel and assets were light during the attack.

I CORPS RIVER PATROL GROUP

On 9 January GAME WARDEN forces, consisting of 10 PBRs, commenced operations on the Hue River, the De L'Ouest and De L'Est Lagoons and the Cau Hai Bay. The GAME WARDEN Tactical Operations Center and PBR Mobile Support Base I for River Section 521 was located at Tan My.

On 31 January PBRs joined with ARVN and U. S. ground forces in a counter-offensive against Viet Cong forces attacking the Hue LCU ramp. Eight patrol boats charged up the Hue River, following

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the commencement of the Viet Cong Tet Offensive, and encountered heavy mortar, rocket and sniper fire when they arrived at the LCU ramp. The enemy appeared to be in control of the northern bank of the Huong river opposite the LCU ramp. The patrol boats made repeated firing runs until the enemy fire was suppressed and the north bank was secured by U. S. Marines the same evening. PBRs remained in the area to maintain the security of the ramp. Two PBR crewmen received minor wounds in the day-long action.

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RUNG SAT SPECIAL ZONE RIVER PATROL GROUP

At 0105 on the morning of 2 January, the Viet Cong initiated a 75-mm recoilless-rifle attack against the Navy base at Nha Be, located 7 miles south of Saigon. Task Group 116.2 units got underway to assume defensive positions as the general alarm sounded. About 10 enemy rounds hit in the vicinity of the pier area as the boat crews maneuvered their boats away from the pier. All boats were able to get underway except MSB 22 which sustained a direct hit during the initial barrage. A raging fire broke out on the boat and burned for one hour. Although the crew valiantly tried to save the minesweeper, the damage inflicted was so extensive the boat was beyond repair and subsequently stricken from the Naval Vessel Register. Two Navymen were wounded in the attack. No other damage was sustained by the base or other attached units. Also

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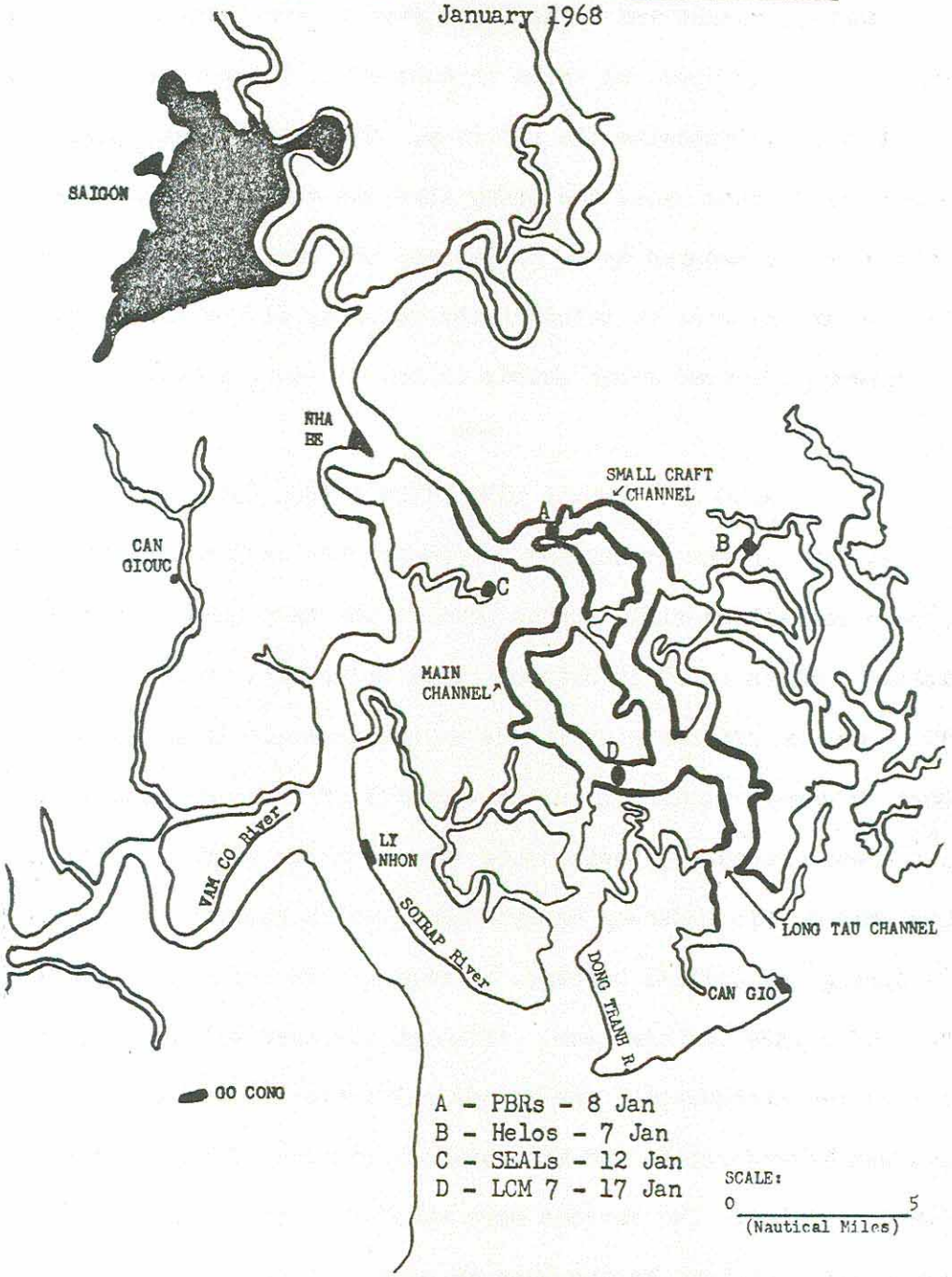
RUNG SAT SPECIAL ZONE OPERATIONS

January 1968



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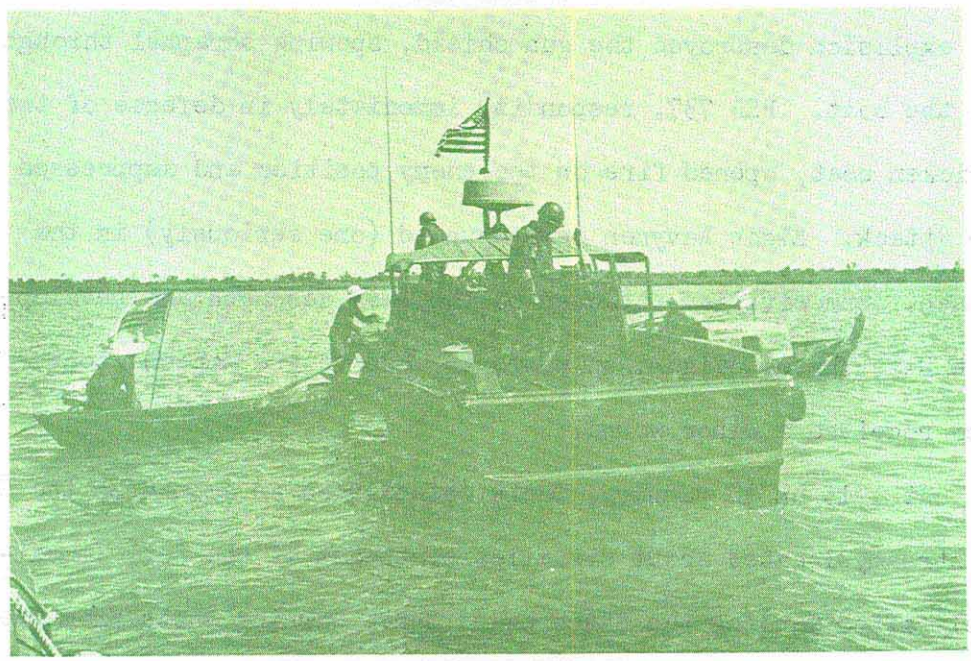
targeted by the enemy was the Nha Be tank farm, a commercial operation located adjacent to the Navy base. The Viet Cong hit four tanks; however, there were no secondary explosions or fire as a result of the attack.



An Operation GAME WARDEN PBR inspects several sampans on the Long Tau river, south of Saigon.

On the morning of 7 January a U. S. Army UH-1D helicopter on a visual reconnaissance mission observed three sampans and one large, covered junk loaded with rice and four Viet Cong in a restricted area, 13 miles east-southeast of Nha Be. A Navy light helicopter

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fire team scrambled to the area and attacked the reported targets. One 45-foot junk, one 30-foot sampan and two 10-foot sampans were destroyed and the four occupants were killed by the "Seawolves". One helicopter crewman received a minor wound during the strike.

On 8 January two Mark II PBRs from River Section 524 were conducting a test fire mission on the upper Dong Tranh river when a B-41 rocket hit PBR 738 on the after .50-caliber gun shield. The explosion destroyed the gun shield, spewing shrapnel throughout the boat. PBR 737, responding immediately in defense of the stricken boat, opened fire on the enemy position and suppressed the attack. Eight Navymen were wounded (one seriously) in the ambush. One civilian attached to the Navy Research and Development Unit Three, Saigon, on board to observe the weapons test, also received a minor wound.

At 1915 on 12 January, SEALs established an ambush on the Cat Co stream, located about six miles southeast of Nha Be. Immediately after landing the SEALs heard three warning shots from the southeast, answered by a single shot from the north. As the SEALs lay in wait the same signal sequence was repeated twice again an hour apart. The disciplined SEALs continued their stealthy vigil and, at 0030, two sampans approached from the north. The ambush was sprung, killing four Viet Cong in the initial burst of fire. Enemy fire was then received from the opposite bank and returned

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by the SEALs. Moaning was heard and M-79 grenades were fired in the direction of the sounds--the sounds stopped. The SEALs withdrew and relanded upstream a short distance to conduct a patrol. At 0900 the SEALs withdrew after having failed to make further contact with the enemy. There were no friendly casualties. Captured were two large sampans with outboard motors.

On 17 January LCM 7, minesweeping on the Long Tau River, was hit by small-arms fire. There were no casualties. This harassment fire followed two recovery incidents of suspected command-detonating wire since 10 January. Two days later a third recovery was made. It was noted that the word "NAVY" was stamped on one connector lug attached to the heavy duty three-strand insulated electrical wire.

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DELTA RIVER PATROL GROUP

Operations in the Mekong (My Tho) River

On 6 January "Seawolves" swept in to assist ARVN troops that were under attack and pinned down by enemy forces, 20 miles northwest of My Tho. The light helicopter fire team, operating from Vinh Long, made repeated attacks on the Viet Cong, permitting the ground units to withdraw in an orderly manner to more secure positions to the north. When the enemy fire had been suppressed the helicopters evacuated 11 critically injured ARVN troops. Enemy

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casualties were unknown. There were no Navymen wounded during the action.

On 12 January a light helicopter fire team en route from Vung Tau to their base at Dong Tam received an intelligence report that a large Viet Cong ceremony was being held in an area about 15 miles due south of Go Cong in Kien Hoa province. The "Seawolves" swung south and when on the target they saturated the area with machine-gun fire and 2.75-inch rockets. Four structures were left destroyed and six additional ones damaged as the helicopters headed home. Later intelligence received from the Kien Hoa Sector Advisor reported that the "Seawolves'" attack killed 14 Viet Cong, wounded 16 others and destroyed one 60-mm mortar and one BAR. There were no friendly casualties.

On 18 January a PBR patrol, proceeding west on the My Tho river en route to its patrol station, observed two sampans evading into a canal located 2½ miles east of the confluence of the My Tho and Ham Luong rivers. PBR 153 gave chase and, as the boat closed the river bank, an estimated Viet Cong platoon sprung their ambush. The enemy opened fire at a range of about 75 meters with an unknown type of rocket, 57-mm recoilless-rifles, automatic weapons and small arms. The patrol boat received two direct rocket hits--one exploded in the coxswain's flat and the other impacted on the radar dome--followed by a recoilless-rifle round in the port side. The Boat

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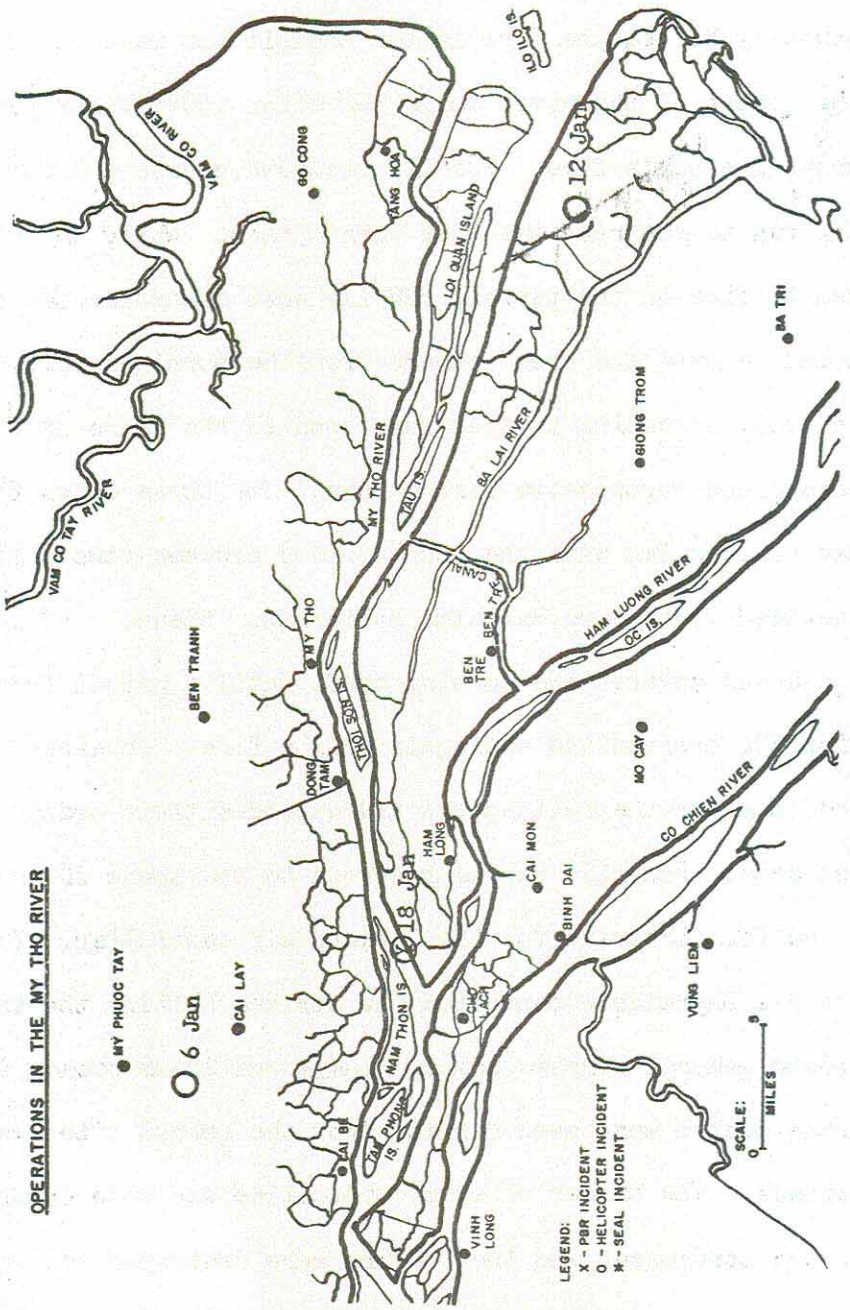

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Commander, BM1 William R. GOLDMAN, though seriously wounded, contemptuously defied the fire in the cockpit and maneuvered his boat to the center of the river while the after .50-caliber gunner returned the enemy's fire. PBR 112 reversed course and commenced a firing run to suppress the Viet Cong attack. While the enemy continued to fire on the patrol, PBR 112 went alongside the stricken boat and removed the crew members from the burning craft. A second PBR patrol, operating in the area, sped to the scene of the attack and commenced suppressive firing runs. The three boats then proceeded to Dong Tam with the four wounded crewmen (two serious) and one wounded Vietnamese Maritime Policeman. "Seawolves" arrived overhead and covered the burning craft until a patrol from River Section 534 arrived and extinguished the fire. An airstrike was called in after the helicopters had expended their ordnance on the target area. PBR 112, having returned to the scene of the action, adjusted the airstrike for the forward air controller. Two Vietnamese A-1 Skyraiders conducted the strike, hitting the target with 250-pound general purpose bombs, napalm and 20-mm cannon fire. Numerous people were seen running from the ambush site during the air attack. The number of enemy casualties was undetermined; however, two structures and two bunkers were destroyed and four structures were damaged. It was strongly apparent that the evading sampans were a ruse to draw the PBRs into the ambush.

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Shortly before midnight on the night of 22 January, two squads of SEALs were landed on the north bank of the Mekong river, 4½ miles east of Sa Dec. Squad 6A patrolled northwest about a half mile and established an ambush site. At 0200 the following morning, they opened fire on an unlighted sampan, killing the four Viet Cong occupants. The squad then moved to the southeast a short distance where they killed two more of the enemy detected in yet another unlighted sampan. The squad moved in a southeasterly direction to await a rendezvous with Squad 6B. Squad 6B, after landing, had patrolled to the northwest. In reaction to 6A's initial contact, an estimated seven Viet Cong in the vicinity of Squad 6 B opened fire from the north bank of the Tien Giang river in the direction of Squad 6A. The SEALs established a hasty ambush and laid in wait. Shortly thereafter, Viet Cong on the south bank of the river returned the fire from their comrades on the north bank. Several cries of pain were heard as the Viet Cong exchanged fire between themselves. Still undetected, Squad 6B initiated their ambush at 0203 on the 23rd, directing their fire simultaneously on a sampan with one occupant aboard and at the Viet Cong on the north bank of the river. The lone Viet Cong was killed. Casualties to the group on the north bank were unknown. As the squad left their ambush site and headed for a join-up with Squad 6A, they contacted and killed one more communist insurgent. The SEALs finally

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withdrew from the area at 0430 after achieving eight kills. There were no U. S. casualties.

Operations in the Co Chien River

On 4 January, three PBRs from River Section 534 were heading north, on a routine patrol on the Mang Thit river, about 13 miles southeast of Vinh Long, when ambushed by a suspected company of Viet Cong. The enemy opened fire on all boats simultaneously from both banks of the river with an extremely effective initial volley aimed at the coxswain's flats and forward gun tubs. All three forward gunners were wounded in the opening moments of the fire fight. The patrol boats retaliated against the enemy positions but were unable to suppress the fire which included at least one U. S. M-60 machine gun and one U. S. M-79 grenade launcher. The boats cleared the ambush area to effect a helicopter medical evacuation of the wounded. A total of four PBR sailors received battle injuries. Gunner's Mate Third Class Dell R. CLAIBORNE, USN, died four days later from a head wound sustained when an enemy bullet pierced his helmet. Casualties inflicted upon the enemy were undetermined.

On 10 January a PBR, conducting an engineering trial in the vicinity of Vinh Long, sighted a swimmer, clad in full rubber suit, face mask and a single air tank, as he broached in the wakes of two other PBRs operating on the river. The swimmer, who was about

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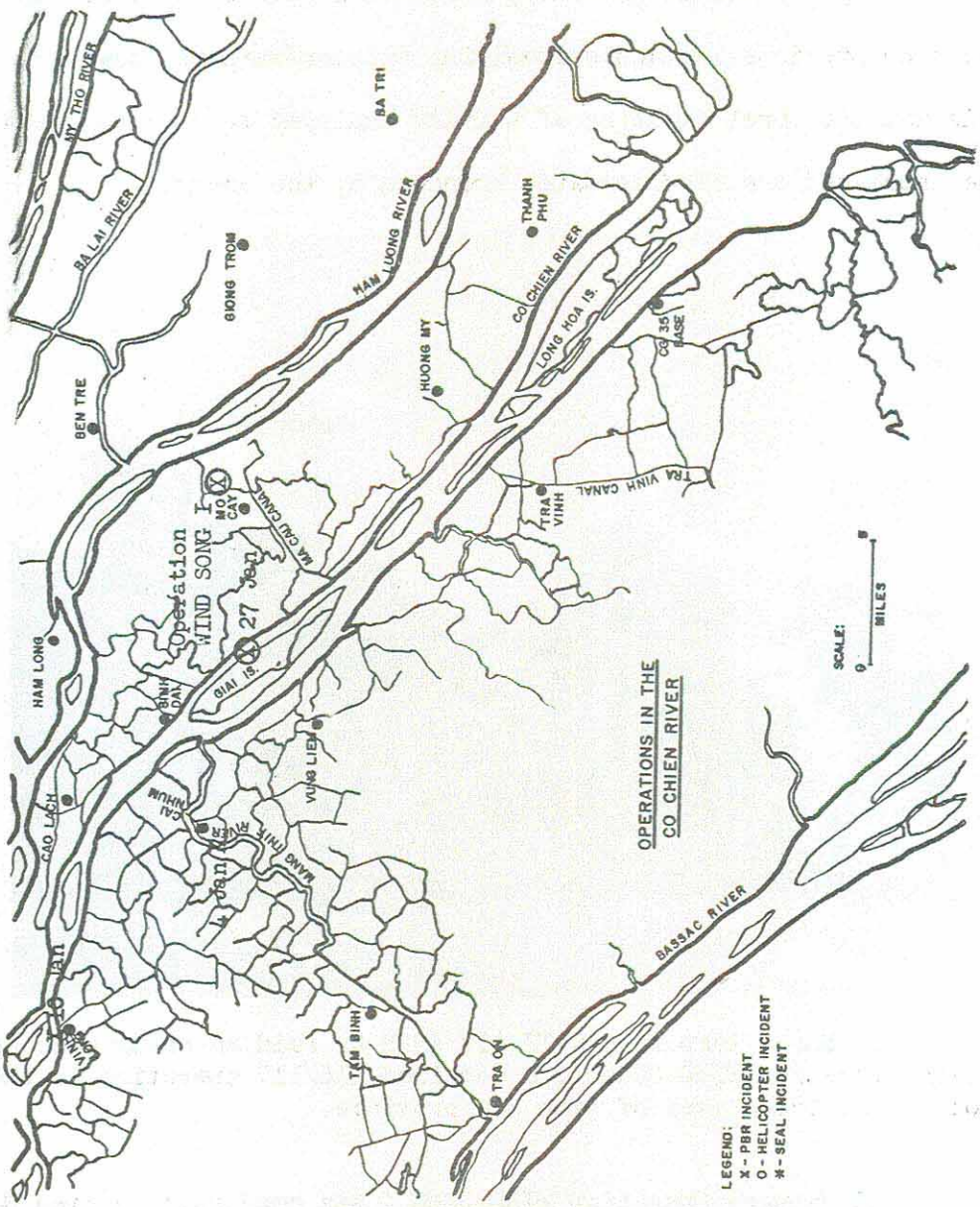

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10 feet from the boat, immediately submerged. A search of the area, using concussion grenades, achieved negative results. There had been previous incidents involving swimmer/sappers; however, this was the first sighting of a fully equipped frogman, suggesting the increased use of underwater ordnance by the enemy.

U. S. Navy SEALs leap from a TF 117 ASPB to raid an enemy base camp during Operation WIND SONG I, a combined 116/117 operation in the Thom/Mo Cay Creek area of Kien Hoa province.

On 25 January Operation WIND SONG I was conducted in Kien Hoa province by units of Task Group 116.2 and Task Force 117, with Commander River Division 52 as Officer in Tactical Command. The mission

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was directed against the Viet Cong-controlled area along the Thom and Mo Cay canals, a major canal waterway linking the Co Chien and Ham Luong Rivers and furnishing the sole route of commerce to Mo Cay district town. The force included eight PBRs, two monitors, four ASPBs (the monitors and ASPBs chopped to CTG 116.2 from CTF 117 for the period of the operation), two SEAL platoons, and two light helicopter fire teams. With the first light of dawn the flotilla of small boats sortied into the inland canal from the Co Chien River. While transitting the canal, psychological operations were conducted and all water traffic was searched. Flying ahead of the boats, the Navy "Seawolves" began blasting enemy bunker positions along the canal while the SEALs were put ashore at the upper and lower ends of the canal. As the SEALs moved in, the "Seawolves" continued their airstrike as the boats along the canal began their attack against Viet Cong positions. Viet Cong resistance was limited to sporadic small-arms fire, but there was no doubt about his presence. Nearly every structure flew a Viet Cong flag and contained pictures of communist leaders. When the SEALs completed their sweep, they had captured 51 Viet Cong suspects. The operation proved to be highly successful, for in addition to the captured suspects, the force killed five Viet Cong and wounded two others in the action. The enemy suffered extensive losses as the armada destroyed five tons of rice, over 30 bunkers, 25 sampans

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and motors, a Viet Cong propaganda center and two Viet Cong tax stations. Also captured were numerous documents of significant intelligence value. There were no friendly casualties.

On 27 January, while conducting harassment and interdiction fire against bunkers and trenches 25 miles southeast of Vinh Long, PBR 52 was hit by a white phosporous rifle grenade. The grenade detonated while in flight, just inside the starboard engine armor, about two feet above the engine covers, with the center of mass traveling to the port side and finally resting on the deck forward of the engine covers. The impact blew the after gunner and the engineer over the side and ignited the boat captain's clothing. The boat captain turned his boat toward the beach and jumped into the water to extinguish his burning clothes. He then remanned his boat to help put out the fire burning on board. The damaged boat was beached and a helicopter medical evacuation called in for one crewman that was seriously wounded. A security perimeter was established around the boat by the covering PBR and additional PBRs that rushed to the scene. Overhead, "Seawolves" provided additional cover for the surface units. PBR 52 was subsequently refloated and returned to base for repairs. Four PBR sailors were wounded in the action. One Viet Cong was seen running on the beach and taken under fire with unknown results.

Operations in the Ham Luong River

While on a routine patrol on the night of 3 January, PBRs 101

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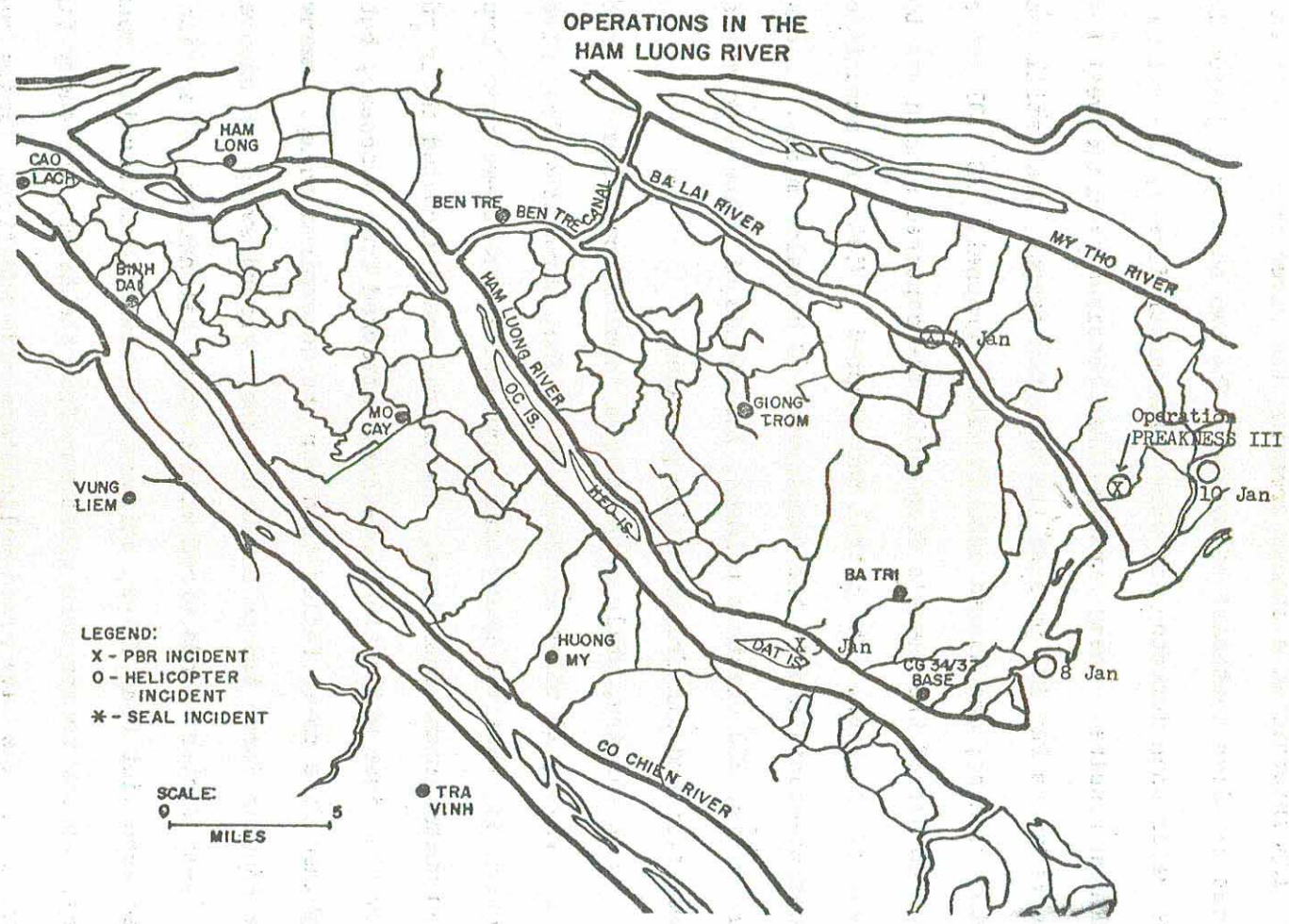

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and 103 interdicted a sampan crossing the river from west to east, about 23 miles southeast of My Tho. The two occupants jumped into the water when detected and were taken under fire by the patrol with unknown results. Enemy fire was then received from the west bank of the river as PBR 103 pursued the unmanned sampan, that still had its motor running, and hooked onto it with a grapnel. PBR 101 returned and suppressed the enemy's fire while the captured sampan was towed clear of the area. The patrol had stopped a Viet Cong ammunition crossing--contained in the sampan were 60 bangalor mines, 40 claymore mines, 200 electric primers, 150 rounds of Chinese Communist ammunition and six fragmentation grenades.

On 4 January, while supporting a Popular Force landing on the Ba Lai river, 20 miles southeast of My Tho, three PBRs from River Section 534 received heavy small-arms and automatic-weapons fire from enemy ground positions. The patrol boats directed their guns from the river while the "Seawolves" attacked from overhead, but the combined fire power failed to deter the determined enemy. Meanwhile, the Popular Force troops conducted their ground sweep and uncovered 60 60-mm mortar rounds wired with command detonators. Also discovered were Viet Cong flags, uniforms and sewing machines in a monastery. As the troops were withdrawn from the beach, the enemy fire continued. The Navy armed helicopters made additional firing runs and received enemy fire on each pass of the target area. When all

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friendly forces were cleared from the area, artillery fire was directed on the monastery and surrounding enemy positions. Known enemy casualties were 11 Viet Cong killed, one captured and nine sampans and four structures destroyed. Two PBR crewmen and two Vietnamese troops were wounded in the action. All PBRs were hit by small-arms or automatic-weapons fire and one helicopter received a bullet hole in the fuselage.

On 8 January a Navy light helicopter fire team on routine patrol spotted a large concentration of enemy junks and sampans just north of the mouth of the Ham Luong river along the coast of the South China Sea. The "Seawolves" then piloted their armed gunships in an attack against the enemy resupply force, expending 2.75-inch rockets and 7.62-mm machine gun fire in repeated attacks. Although light small-arms and automatic-weapons fire was returned there were no friendly casualties. Two secondary explosions were observed in the surface targets and were estimated to be comparable to that of 155-mm shells. Four junks and 10 sampans were destroyed and 20 other craft were damaged.

On the evening of 10 January, Operation PREAKNESS III was launched along the Ba Lai river, an area of high Viet Cong activity, particularly around the focal points of Thu Ba Lai village and Ong Luong Canal. The first was a major staging, administrative and rest area, while the second area was a major receiving and transportation

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center for arms and ammunition. Both areas are located near the mouth of the Ba Lai river. Units of TG 116.3 and TG 117.1 joined in the assault on the Viet Cong-infested areas and marked the first joint undertaking of this nature between units of the River Patrol Force and Riverine Assault Force. SEALs, PBRs, two Navy light helicopter fire teams and six Assault Support Patrol Boats (ASPBs) made the transit. The strike force destroyed 24 sampans, 34 huts and 20 bunkers. The naval units noted mud and mud/log offensive bunkers facing the entire length of the canal and many signs of recent enemy activity. There were no friendly casualties.

On 10 January, while conducting a Ba Lai patrol, Navy "Seawolves", acting on an intelligence report, attacked a high-level Viet Cong meeting near the mouth of the Ba Lai river. The armed helicopters made repeated passes over the target for 15 minutes, and destroyed one structure and damaged three others. A large secondary explosion was observed from the primary target structure. Two Viet Cong were known to have been killed by the air attack; however, an intelligence report received the next day from Binh Dai sub sector raised the enemy casualty figures to 17 killed and 23 wounded. There were no friendly casualties.

On 31 January Navy "Seawolves" and PBRs aggressively engaged the communist insurgents following the enemy's vicious and destructive attack on the city of Ben Tre. For two days, the Navy helicopters

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were constantly airborne, making repeated strikes against the Viet Cong who had overrun parts of the city, while the PBRs operated on the river to close off the enemy's avenues of resupply. As the tide of battle swung in favor of the friendly forces, the patrol boats and "Seawolves" continued to attack the retreating enemy as they faded back into the countryside.

Operations in the Bassac River

On the morning of 2 January, SEALs, accompanied by a Hoi Chanh, were landed about 12 miles southeast of Can Tho. The Viet Cong returnee led the SEALs to two enemy huts where a Viet Cong security element was encountered. In the ensuing fire fight, six Viet Cong were killed and the area secured. The huts were set ablaze and 800 pounds of rice were destroyed before the SEALs moved on to a cache site nearby. They located one hole four feet by two feet and four feet deep, reinforced with bamboo and covered with mud. The cache hole was empty. The SEALs placed a claymore mine with an anti-disturbance mechanism in the bottom and withdrew from the area under sniper fire. Later that evening, the Hoi Chanh directed a squad to a known Viet Cong communications liaison cadre about two miles northeast of the morning incident. The SEALs captured their man; however, he was killed when he attempted to escape as the SEALs were withdrawing. There were no friendly casualties in either operation.

On 5 January two PBRs supported Popular Force landings on an

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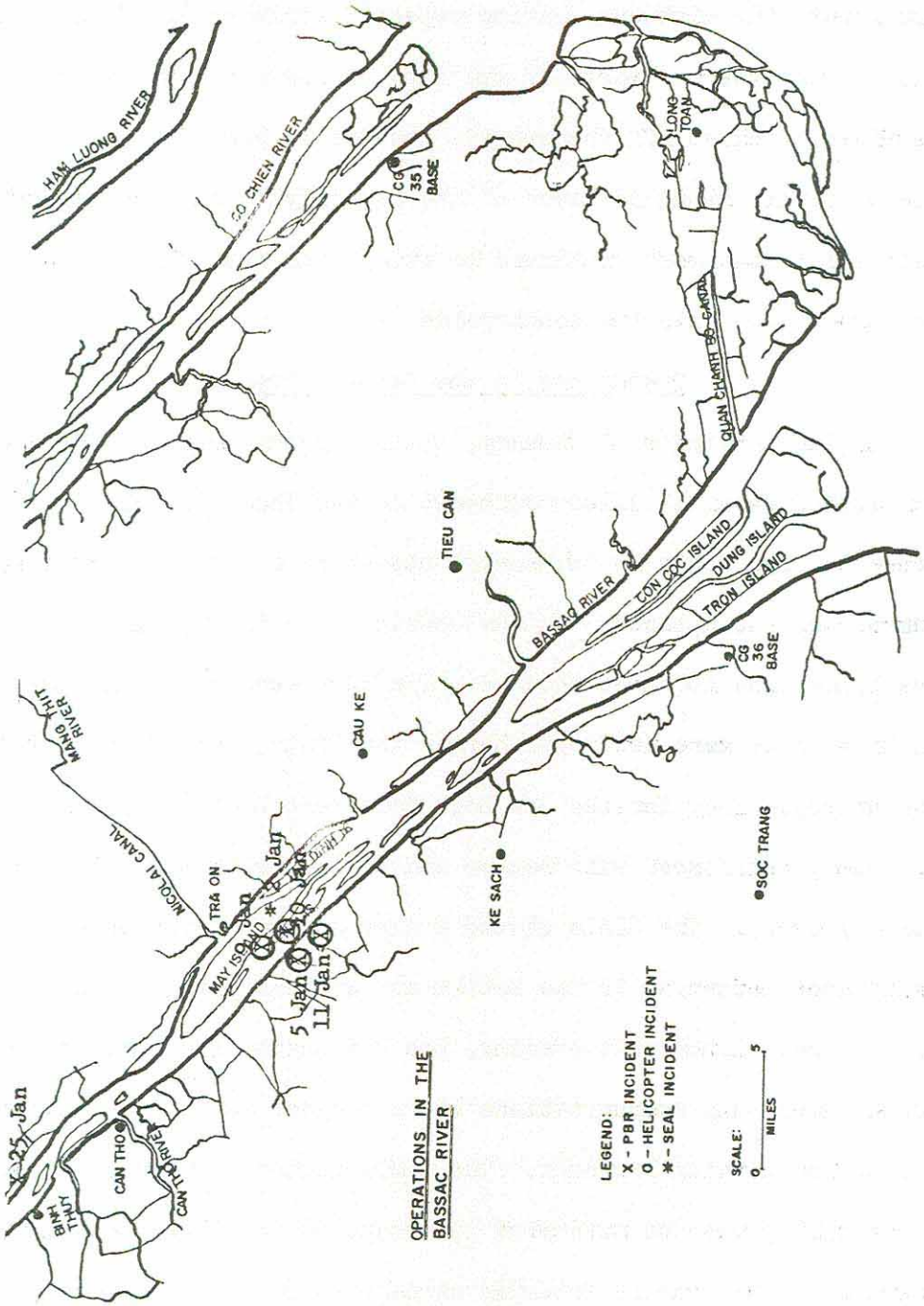

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island located on the Cai Con canal, 18 miles southeast of Binh Thuy off the Bassac River. In the period between 0700 and 1400, the troops made three landings accompanied by PBR landing parties. "Seawolves" made repeated strikes against the enemy as contact was gained. The successful operation was highlighted by the courage and initiative displayed by the Popular Force troops when joined in combat with GAME WARDEN units against a common foe. Two U. S. Navy sailors received minor wounds during the action. Six Viet Cong were killed--four by the PBRs, one by the Popular Forces and one by the "Seawolves". Six structures were destroyed and six others heavily damaged by the Navy guns. Two sampans were sunk and four individual weapons were captured before the day's activity was terminated.

Shortly after noon on 9 January, a PBR patrol, operating 11 miles southeast of Can Tho, was ambushed by the enemy. PBR 722 was drifting about 125 meters from the beach when a crewman spotted a rocket as it appeared, coming from the heavy foliage on the shore. The B-40 rocket trailed black smoke throughout its trajectory, impacting the boat on the port side aft. The cover boat, PBR 725, instantly opened fire on the ambush site, deterring any further launchings. Both boats commenced firing passes and came under automatic-weapons fire from at least seven different firing positions. Unable to suppress the enemy fire and to prevent PBR 722 from sinking, the boat was beached. PBR 725 continued to direct its guns

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against the enemy until all ammunition was expended. The boat, even though lacking any firepower, remained in the area to direct helicopter strikes on the target. Additional PBRs arrived on the scene shortly thereafter and relieved PBR 725. PBR 722 was refloated and returned to the base at Binh Thuy. Seven PBR sailors received minor wounds in the fire fight that continued for over two hours. Only one Viet Cong body was found after the battle; however, numerous blood trails were detected in the area along with one Chinese Communist rifle. The next day the enemy scored another direct rocket hit against PBRs operating 12 miles southeast of Can Tho. The action commenced when a PBR patrol entered a canal on Nai Island and immediately came under enemy fire. The boats reversed course back to the main river, escaping a barrage of B-40 rockets that landed within 10 feet of the boats. PBRs 723 and 726 responded to the call of the boats under fire and, at full power, roared to the scene of the action. Meanwhile, a Navy light helicopter fire team scrambled from Binh Thuy to join in the fire fight. The four boats were making firing runs against the enemy positions when another rocket was fired, hitting PBR 723 portside amidships, just above the water line. The round passed through the boat without detonating. The PBR withdrew from the battle and headed home at full speed to keep the boat on step, thereby preventing flooding through the two holes. The extent of enemy casualties was undetermined; however, a large secondary

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explosion was observed in the vicinity of the rocket launchings. Four PBR crewmen were wounded in the action.

At about 1400 on the afternoon of 11 January, a PBR patrol, operating 11 miles southeast of Can Tho, received one B-40 round and small-arms fire from the west bank of the river. The boats opened fire and the enemy responded with two more B-40 rocket rounds. The aim of the enemy gunners manning the rockets was off, but small-arms marksmen scored hits on the attacking boats. When word of the ambush reached the PBR base at Binh Thuy, Navy "Sea-wolves" were scrambled at 1458, followed by a decision to execute Operation QUICK KILL at 1515. SEALs were landed just south of the ambush site at 1550 and a sweep of the Viet Cong-infested area was commenced under the supporting fire from PBRs and Navy helicopter gunships. At 1705 after working their way north, the SEALs came upon an enemy bunker. A fire fight erupted as the occupants poured out of the bunker with guns blazing. One SEAL, Seaman Apprentice Roy B. KEITH, USN, was killed when hit by an automatic-weapon burst. Five Viet Cong were killed in the return fire of SA KEITH's ship-mates. The operation terminated at 1820 after no further contact was made. Captured in the operation were three AK-47 automatic rifles, one B-40 rocket launcher, three B-40 rounds, and 120 rounds of AK-47 ammunition, plus numerous documents. It was considered that the quick reaction of all forces was the primary reason for

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the successful operation and capture of the weapons. It was recommended that a force of U. S. Army or U. S. Marine troops be attached to river commands for this type of quick reaction operation.

Acting on an intelligence report, on 25 January, that the Naval Support Activity Detachment Binh Thuy (headquarters for Commander Task Force 116), would be attacked at 2230, five PBRs conducted a close-in support patrol. At 2238 the PBRs engaged an enemy force that had attacked one of the patrol boats from multiple positions across the river from the GAME WARDEN base. In the exchange of fire, during which time the Viet Cong used recoilless rifles, automatic weapons and small arms, three Navymen were wounded slightly. Enemy casualties were unknown.

On 31 January units of the River Patrol Force were instrumental in saving the capital of Chau Doc Province from destruction during the Tet Offensive. Their actions substantially contributed to saving the lives of many civilians, including American and Vietnamese government employees. The units, composed of PBRs, a platoon of SEALs and a Naval Support Activity LCM-6 support craft, were the tactical units of Operation BOLD DRAGON. Their mission was to prevent the Viet Cong from infiltrating men and supplies across the Cambodian border, three miles west of the city, during the scheduled Lunar New Year truce.

At 0200 on the 31st, the SEALs made first contact with the Viet

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Cong during a reconnaissance mission along the frequently used routes of enemy infiltration. The Navymen had stealthfully come upon a reinforced platoon of Viet Cong, near the border, covering the crossing of an estimated 200 enemy troops. Because of the size of the enemy force, the SEALs withdrew to the river to join up with the PBRs and report their intelligence.

At 0310 the city of Chau Doc came under a heavy enemy attack by a large concentration of enemy troops, estimated to be about 1,400 men. As the enemy attack began, two PBRs and the LCM-6 were tied up at the piers in Chau Doc, while the other two PBRs were on the Bassac rendezvousing with the SEALs.

The LCM, with a full crew aboard, got underway in less than five minutes, followed by the two moored PBRs, with only a boat captain and one crewman aboard each boat. The other PBR crewmen were at the Special Forces' Camp ARNN, where the crews were being billeted.

As the LCM and PBRs made their way out into the main stream of the river, the LCM was hit by a 57-mm recoilless-rifle round above the waterline, wounding two crewmen.

The PBR commanders requested men from the LCM to man the .50 caliber machine guns. Even though Hospital Corpsman Third Class David B. CROCKETT, Jr., USN, was wounded twice, he volunteered, along with two other crewmen, to transfer to one of the PBRs where

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he manned one of the machine guns.

The PBRs made repeated firing runs on the enemy positions while resupplying from the LCM support boat, but were unable to suppress the enemy's fire. They were successful, however, in keeping much of the enemy's forces tied down until the other PBRs and the SEALs arrived about two and a half hours later.

Upon their arrival, and under intense small-arms and automatic-weapons fire, the PBRs disembarked the SEAL platoon into the city. The patrol boats then commenced a series of firing runs on the enemy positions while the SEALs began the rescue of U. S. citizens who were trapped in the town.

By 0830 that morning, they had been successful in rescuing 10 U. S. and six Vietnamese Government civilian employees. One of the U. S. civilians had been wounded. By prearranged signal, the PBRs came in, picked up those rescued, and evacuated them to the LCM at midstream in the river--500 yards offshore.

The SEALs then returned to the main part of the city of Chau Doc, taking and securing key military and civilian installations. One SEAL, Aviation Structural Mechanic (Hydraulics) Second Class Clarence T. RISHER, III, USN, was killed while engaging an enemy rooftop heavy automatic weapons position. Fighting ferociously from an adjacent rooftop without consideration for his own safety, AMH2 RISHER, before being mortally wounded, neutralized the enemy

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position and freed his teammates who were pinned down by the withering Viet Cong fire.

At 1130 that morning, five PBRs from River Section 513 at Sa Dec, dispatched to assist the operation, arrived on the scene. By this time, the Special Forces' Camp Arnn was under heavy attack from all sides. The Task Unit Commander, Lieutenant John F. DOYLE, USN, formed the nine PBRs in column and made firing runs on the enemy attacking the camp. During one of the runs, one of the PBRs received a direct hit by a rocket, disabling the craft for the remainder of the action. The boat, however, made it to the LCM where emergency repairs were made to keep it afloat.

At four different times during the day as the heavy fighting continued, the SEALs and PBRs were able to secure temporary landing zones for helicopters. On another occasion, following three attempts aborted due to heavy enemy fire, the PBRs finally charged in and successfully resupplied friendly forces with ammunition.

At 1930 two PBRs evacuated 13 Vietnamese military and civilian personnel to Long Xuyen medical facilities about 24 miles downriver. Two SEAL corpsmen accompanied the PBRs during the transit, administering first aid to the wounded. At 0300 the next morning, 1 February, the two PBRs returned to Chau Doc, bringing fresh water and medical supplies.

About 0730 that morning, after having been withdrawn the night

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before to resupply and regroup, the SEALs were again landed at Chau Doc, where they began flushing the Viet Cong out of buildings and securing the city's hospital which had become an enemy stronghold. During the fight for the hospital, the PBRs completed about 30 firing runs to break down the enemy resistance. After the friendly forces retook the hospital, the two SEAL corpsmen began treating the wounds of Vietnamese military and civilian personnel.

By 0800, the combined force of SEALs and PBRs broke the enemy blockade around the Special Forces camp. While the other PBRs provided cover, one PBR beached at Camp Arnn to pick up the PBR sailors who had been trapped there.

For the remainder of the operation, and until the Navy units were ready to return to their bases at Binh Thuy and Sa Dec on 2 February, the SEALs kept key installations in the city secure while the PBRs patrolled and blockaded all water entrances into the city. There was one U. S. sailor killed and four wounded while the Viet Cong had at least 20 killed during the action between the communist insurgents and the Navymen. All boats participating in the operation sustained hostile fire damage of a varying degree, ranging from small arms to rocket hits.

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GAME WARDEN UNITS

On 3 January the task force organization was revised to effect

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a greater responsiveness to the complex demands of the diverse elements of the force, and to enhance the capability for coordinating these elements regardless of location. Commanders of river patrol units were redesignated Task Group Commanders. Task Element Commanders were similarly upgraded to Task Unit Commanders in most cases. The task force was reorganized as follows:

Task Organization	Operational Title	CDR/CO
TF 116	River Patrol Force	COMRIVPATFOR
TG 116.1	Bassac River Patrol Group	COMRIVDIV 51
TU 116.1.0	Delta SEAL Support Unit A	OIC SEAL Team Det A Eighth Platoon
TU 116.1.1	Bassac River Patrol Unit A	OIC RIVPATSEC 511
TU 116.1.2	Bassac River Patrol Unit B	OIC RIVPATSEC 512
TU 116.1.3	Bassac River Patrol Unit C	OIC RIVPATSEC 535
TU 116.1.4	Bassac River Patrol Unit D	Not Activated
TU 116.1.5	Not Assigned	
TU 116.1.6	Bassac River LST Support Unit	CO, USS JENNINGS CTY
TU 116.1.7	Not Assigned	
TU 116.1.8	Bassac River Helo Support Unit A	OIC HAL-3 DET 1
TU 116.1.9	Bassac River Helo Support Unit B	OIC HAL-3 DET 7
TG 116.2	Co Chien River Patrol Group	COMRIVDIV 52
TU 116.2.0	Delta SEAL Support Unit B	OIC SEAL Team Det A Sixth Platoon
TU 116.2.1	Co Chien River Patrol Unit A	OIC RIVPATSEC 513
TU 116.2.2	Co Chien River Patrol Unit B	Not Assigned
TU 116.2.3	Co Chien River Patrol Unit C	OIC RIVPATSEC 523
TU 116.2.4	Co Chien River Patrol Unit D	OIC RIVPATSEC 522
TU 116.2.5	Not Assigned	
TU 116.2.6	Co Chien River LST Support Unit	CO, USS GARRETT CTY
TU 116.2.7	Not Assigned	
TU 116.2.8	Co Chien River Helo Support Unit A	OIC HAL-3 DET 4
TU 116.2.9	Co Chien River Helo Support Unit B	OIC HAL-3 DET 3
TG 116.3	My Tho River Patrol Group	COMRIVDIV 53

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TU 116.3.0	Delta SEAL Support Unit C	OIC SEAL Team Det A Seventh Platoon
TU 116.3.1	My Tho River Patrol Unit A	OIC RIVPATSEC 533
TU 116.3.2	My Tho River Patrol Unit B	OIC RIVPATSEC 532
TU 116.3.3	My Tho River Patrol Unit C	OIC RIVPATSEC 534
TU 116.3.4	My Tho River Patrol Unit D	OIC RIVPATSEC 531
TU 116.3.5	Not Assigned	
TU 116.3.6	My Tho River LST Support Unit	CO, USS HARNETT CTY
TU 116.3.7	Not Assigned	
TU 116.3.8	My Tho River Helo Support Unit A	OIC HAL-3 DET 5
TU 116.3.9	My Tho River Helo Support Unit B	OIC HAL-3 DET 6
TG 116.4	Rung Sat Special Zone Patrol Group	RSSZ Advisor
TU 116.4.0	Rung Sat Special Zone SEAL Unit	OIC SEAL Team Det G
TE 116.4.0.1	Rung Sat Special Zone Boat Support Element	OIC MST-3
TE 116.4.0.2	Rung Sat Special Zone SEAL Support Element A	OIC SEAL Team Det G ALFA Platoon
TE 116.4.0.3	Rung Sat Special Zone SEAL Support Element B	OIC SEAL Team Det G FOXTROT Platoon
TE 116.4.0.4	Rung Sat Special Zone SEAL Support Element C	OIC SEAL Team Det G BRAVO Platoon
TU 116.4.1	Rung Sat Special Zone Patrol Unit	COMRIVDIV 54
TE 116.4.1.1	Rung Sat Special Zone Patrol Element A	OIC RIVPATSEC 541
TE 116.4.1.2	Rung Sat Special Zone Patrol Element B	OIC RIVPATSEC 542
TE 116.4.1.3	Rung Sat Special Zone Patrol Element C	OIC RIVPATSEC 543
TE 116.4.1.4	Rung Sat Special Zone Patrol Element D	Not Activated
TU 116.4.2	Rung Sat Special Zone Mine-sweeping Unit	OIC MINRON 11 DET A
TU 116.4.3	Not Assigned	
TU 116.4.4	Not Assigned	
TU 116.4.5	Not Assigned	
TU 116.4.6	Rung Sat Special Zone LST Support Unit	Not Activated
TU 116.4.7	Not Assigned	
TU 116.4.8	Rung Sat Special Zone Helo Support Unit A	OIC HAL-3 DET 2

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TU 116.4.9	Rung Sat Special Zone Helo Support Unit B	Not Activated
TG 116.5	Not Assigned	
TG 116.6	Delta SEAL Group	OIC SEAL Team Det A
TU 116.6.1	Delta Boat Support Unit	OIC MST-2
TG 116.7	Not Assigned	
TG 116.8	Helo Support Group	CO HAL-3
TG 116.9	Not Assigned	
Not Assigned	I Corps River Patrol Group	COMRIVDIV 55
Not Assigned	I Corps River Patrol Unit A	OIC RIVPATSEC 521

On 9 January River Section 521 commenced GAME WARDEN operations in I Corps Tactical Zone.

On 9 January River Section 534 (TU 116.3.3) commenced operations from APL-55 located near Dong Tam on the My Tho river.

On 10 January Commander Task Force 117 changed operational control of one Assault Support Patrol Boat (ASPB) to Commander Task Force 116 for a 30-day period to evaluate the suitability of the craft for GAME WARDEN operations. Commander Task Group 116.3 was assigned evaluation responsibility.

On 17 January River Section 524, based at My Tho, commenced operations on the My Tho River.

From 28-31 January, four PBRs from River Section 535 (TU 116.1.3) at Binh Thuy extended GAME WARDEN patrols to the upper Bassac River during the Tet holiday period to prevent an expected influx of enemy supplies from Cambodia. The PBRs were based at the U. S. Special Forces camp at Chau Doc.

From 29-31 January, five PBRs from River Section 513 (TU 116.2.1)

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at Sa Dec patrolled the upper Mekong river to guard against an expected infiltration of supplies during the Tet holiday period. The PBRs were based at the U. S. Special Forces camp at Thuong Thoi.

On 31 January, River Section 531 shifted from USS HARNETT COUNTY (LST 821) to My Tho and assumed TU 116.3.2. River Section 532 shifted from My Tho to HARNETT COUNTY and assumed TU 116.3.4.

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GAME WARDEN STATISTICAL SUMMARY

1. PBR Statistics:

   a. Total Patrols (two boats): Day 819.5 Night 813

   b. Total Contacts: Day 58,212 Night 5,968

   c. Total Inspected: Day 14,440 Night 2,276

   d. Total Boarded: Day 33,259 Night 2,293

   e. People Detained: 1,257

   f. Sampans/Junks Detained: 55

   g. Total Patrol Hours: 21,891.5

2. Helicopter Fire Team Statistics:

   a. Total Flight Hours: 1,369.7

   b. Helicopter Missions:

      (1) Preplanned strikes: 151

      (2) Reaction: 92

      (3) Targets of opportunity: 142

      (4) Support: 300

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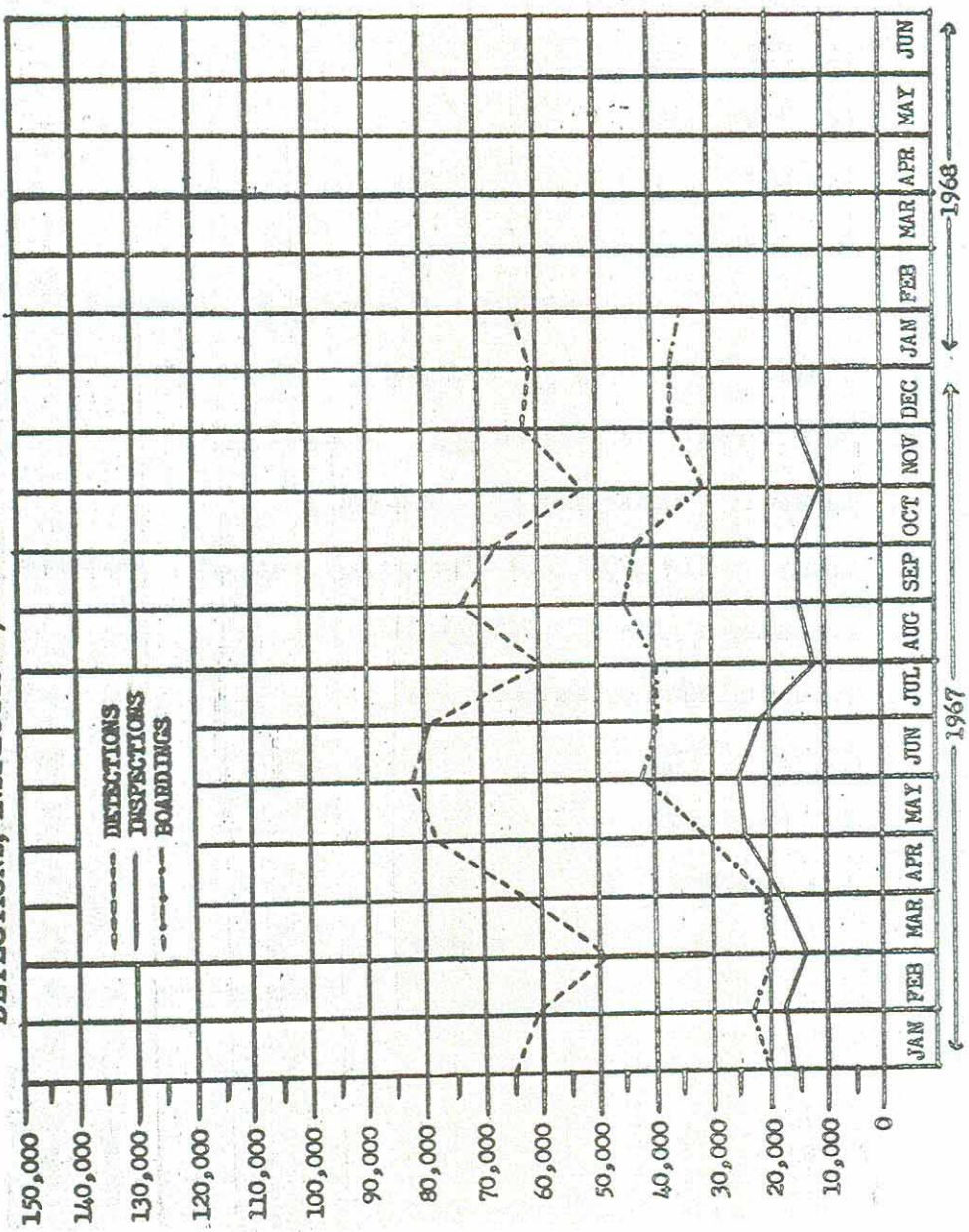

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3. GAME WARDEN Totals:

a. Fire Fights:

(1) PBR 43

(2) Helo 16

(3) LCM 1

(4) LCPL 1

b. Sampans: Destroyed 124 Damaged 116 Captured 11

c. Junks: Destroyed 7 Damaged 1

d. Structures: Destroyed 263 Damaged 125

e. Bunkers: Destroyed 77 Damaged 1

f. Enemy: KIA 120 KIA (Poss.) 47 WIA 36 Captured 51

g. Friendly: KIA 1 WIA 82

h. Friendly Battle Damage:

(1) PBR 43

(2) Helo 25

i. PBR MEDEVAC: 61

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RIVERINE ASSAULT FORCE (TASK FORCE 117)

MOBILE RIVERINE FORCE OPERATIONS

The operational atmosphere for the Mobile Riverine Force (MRF) in the month of January ranged from the relative calmness and serenity of the New Year's Truce period to the explosive and devastating holocaust of the Viet Cong Tet offensive. With the return of USS BENEWAH (APB 35) and USS COLLETON (APB 36) to the Mobile Riverine Base (MRB), the MRF once again regained their operational mobility, relocating from the Mekong to the Ham Luong and Co Chien Rivers while supporting strike operations against targets in Kien Hoa, Vinh Long, Long An and Dinh Tuong provinces.

Operations in Dinh Tuong Province

Throughout the New Year Truce Period (311800H Dec-020600H Jan), units of the MRF conducted riverine operations in the Cam Son and Ban Long Secret Zones of Dinh Tuong province. These operations were designed to sever suspected Viet Cong-utilized channels of supply.

During the truce period there were no significant engagements with the enemy, although on 1 January the troops in the field received some automatic-weapons fire while in interdictory positions along the Ba Rai stream, 11 miles northeast of Vinh Long. Close fire support from two ASPBs and two monitors of TU 117.1.1 silenced the enemy fire. There were no friendly casualties and Viet Cong

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losses were undetermined.

On 3-4 January the MRF made preparations for strike operations in the Giong Trom District of Kien Hoa province. This two-battalion search and destroy phase of Operation CORONADO IX (5-7 January) was undertaken to locate and destroy elements of the Viet Cong 516th Local Force and the 518th Main Force Battalions.

Late on the evening of 4 January, after elements of the MRF departed for the area of operations, all underway units were recalled to participate in a search and rescue operation for a downed L-19 observation plane. The light spotter plane crashed east of the Xang canal in the vicinity north of Long Dinh, seven miles north of Dong Tam in Dinh Tuong province. The special search and rescue operation was conceived, planned and executed within hours of the reported crash, and the search units of the MRF moved out from Dong Tam at 0200 under the cover of darkness to commence the operation. At 0755 on the same morning, an Army gunship discovered the wreckage with the bodies of both occupants alongside the aircraft. In view of the fact that both bodies were stripped of all documents, the operation was deemed compromised and subsequently cancelled.

Operations in Vinh Long Province

After a brief two-day maintenance period the MRF conducted a two-battalion search and destroy operation in the Don Nhon district

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of eastern Vinh Long province.

River Assault Squadrons NINE and ELEVEN provided support to elements of the 2nd Brigade of the U. S. NINTH Infantry Division as they operated in a Viet Cong sanctuary heretofore unmolested by the combined Navy/Army assault forces of the MRF.

On the afternoon of 7 January heavy contact was established with two platoons of enemy guerrillas, 21 miles east of Vinh Long. In the ensuing six-hour battle the Viet Cong fought furiously but left behind 28 of their dead comrades. Sporadic sniper fire and small fire fights continued throughout the night as naval riverine craft established waterborne blocks to intercept any exfiltarting Viet Cong.

As a result of this two-day running battle the Viet Cong had 30 men killed and two prisoners captured, while friendly casualties consisted of two sailors and eight soldiers wounded.

Operations in Dinh Tuong Province

On 10 January, taking advantage of the newly raised bridge northwest of Cai Be, a two-battalion riverine operation was conducted in the Cai Be district of Dinh Tuong province. This phase of Operation CORONADO IX (10-12 January) was planned to locate, entrap and destroy the 261st Main Force Battalion and local Viet Cong guerrillas.

Supported by three artillery sites, which were emplaced during

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the night and early morning hours, RADs 91 and 111, consisting of 45 assorted riverine craft, moved single file up the Thong Lui Stream with their embarked troops. Upon reaching the junction of the Thong Lui and Tra Lot streams, RAD 111, with the 4/47th embarked, held up while RAD 92 with the 3/60th moved up the narrow Tra Lot stream to the north and assaulted beaches on the north bank at 1015.

At 1045, approximately three miles to the west, RAD 111 landed the 4/47th on the east bank of the Hai Muoi Tam canal, about seven miles northwest of Cai Be, to try and entrap the elusive enemy.

At 1430, upon being informed that the 3/60th to the east was heavily engaged with elements of the Viet Cong 261st Main Force Battalion, RAD 111 backloaded the 4/47th and lifted them up the shallow Tra Lot stream to the area of intense fighting, five miles north-northwest of Cai Be. Due to the rapidly ebbing tidal waters in the barely navigable Tra Lot Stream, the riverine units were forced to withdraw to the deeper Thong Lui Stream and Mekong River.

Meanwhile, Alfa Company of the 3/60th, which had been air-lifted into the objective area, became isolated by savage enemy fire and suffered heavy losses with one man killed and 32 wounded. Pinned down and short of ammunition and supplies, the Army unit spent a long, arduous night awaiting the dawn and "medevac"

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helicopters. Nighttime attempts to re-supply and evacuate the wounded and beleaguered troops were futile as enemy weaponry thwarted the helicopters.

The operation continued through the next afternoon when the bone-weary troops departed the objective area, leaving behind 73 dead Viet Cong. The U. S. Army troops suffered 21 killed and had 59 wounded in the bitterly contested battle with the Viet Cong 261st Main Force Battalion.

Operations in Long An Province

On the evening of 11 January, during the passage back to Dong Tam, a request was received from the Commanding General, U. S. NINTH Infantry Divison, to react to an intelligence report of a large enemy buildup in the Binh Phouc district of Long An province. Plans were rapidly formulated and issued during the night while necessary boat repairs, refueling and provisioning were accomplished.

After having "rested" at Dong Tam for six hours, RAD 112 commenced the rapid-reaction operation at 0430 by escorting the artillery barges to the fire support base. RAD 111 with the 4/47th embarked, got underway at 0630 and RAD 91 with the 3/60th aboard, followed them one-half hour later.

Initial contact was made as riverine units of RAD 111 were preparing to land troops and were ambushed from the banks of the Vam Co Tay river, about 11 miles northwest of Go Cong. The enemy

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fire, consisting of recoilless-rifle, B-40 rockets and automatic-weapons fire, was suppressed with flamethrowers, rifle grenades and 20-mm, 40-mm and .50 caliber gunfire, and the landings were conducted without further interference. There were seven Viet Cong killed and 44 bunkers destroyed in the two-day operation while friendly forces went unscathed. The exhausted troops returned to the MRB on the evening of 13 January for a two-day respite.

Operations in Dinh Tuong Province

On 16 January assault forces of the MRF conducted a joint cordon and search operation with the Vietnamese National Police from My Tho. The search was conducted in An Quoi village, located just east of the Dong Tam Base, which had been the subject of reports indicating infiltration by the Viet Cong.

Units of the MRF formed a cordon around three sides of the village, while RAD 91 provided a four-ASPB water block on the fourth side, and thus sealed off the area while Vietnamese National Police conducted a thorough search of the village. As a result of this operation 68 Viet Cong suspects were detained, and 12 soldiers were wounded by booby traps.

Operation CORONADO IX, which commenced on 2 November, terminated in Dinh Tuong province upon the culmination of this cordon and search operation. Cumulative results were: friendly forces suffered 76 killed and 374 wounded while the enemy lost 434 killed

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and 611 detained.

Operations in Kien Hoa Province

Two days later the MRF initiated Operation CORONADO X (18-19 January), a two-battalion strike operation in the Giong Trom district of Kien Hoa province. The operation was characterized by scattered contact with hit-and-run rocket assaults directed at the assault craft.

At 0749 on 18 Janaury, an ATC (flamethrower), T-112-1, was struck by two B-40 rocket rounds while on a blocking station at the confluence of the Ong Buong stream and Ben Tre river, six miles southeast of Ben Tre. The explosion killed Lieutenant Commander Robert E. CONDON, USN, the Commanding Officer of Underwater Demolition Team TWELVE, and wounded one crewmember.

The next morning two ASPB's, A-91-3 and A-91-7, proceeding south of the Tai Phu stream, three miles southeast of Ben Tre, were ambushed by B-40 rockets and automatic-weapons fire from the west bank. The enemy fire was rapidly silenced, but Viet Cong casualties were undetermined. One Vietnamese interpreter was slightly wounded.

Operations in Dinh Tuong Province

On 22 January the MRB relocated to the convergence of the Mekong and Co Chien rivers in order to provide support for MRF units conducting Operation CORONADO X (22-23 January) in the Cai Be district of Dinh Tuong province. Enemy contact was sporadic

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during the two-day operation with six U. S. soldiers killed, while enemy casualties were unknown.

At 1425 on 24 January, YTB-785, transitting in the middle of the My Tho river en route from Dong Tam to the MRB, was hit by an RPG-7 (B-41) rocket round. The incident, which occurred about five miles west of Dong Tam, caused minor damage to the tug's main engine exhaust stack and slightly wounded one sailor and one Vietnamese interpreter. GAME WARDEN PBRs on patrol in the area, and Dong Tam-based Navy helicopter gunships scrambled to the ambush site and saturated the area with rocket and machine gun fire. Enemy casualties were undetermined.

Operations in Kien Hoa Province

At first light on 25 January the MRB relocated to the intersection of the Ham Luong and Ben Tre rivers to support riverine operations in the Mo Cay and Huong My districts of Kien Hoa province. Although the assault forces had operated in the area before, the relocation of the MRB into the Ham Luong River constituted another first for the MRF.

The primary mission of this operation was to locate and destroy elements of the 570th Viet Cong Local Force Battalion and elements of an unknown battalion operating in the area. Contact in the area of operations was very light during the first day; however, late in the afternoon, in response to an urgent plea from the Province

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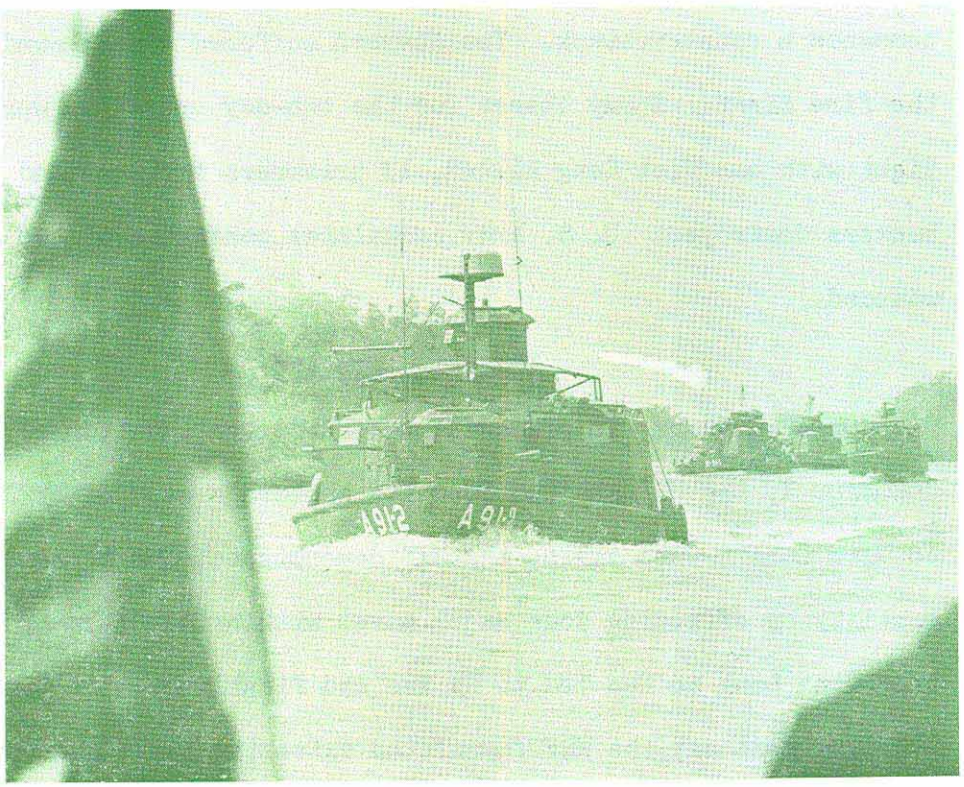
Chief for help, the MRF commenced making plans to shift its area of operations to Truc Giang district, north of Ben Tre. The MRB relocated to a location east of My Tho to provide close support to the MRF assault forces.



U. S. Navy river assault craft and river patrol boats move up the Rach Thom/Mo Cay Canal during a combined Task Force 116/117 operation, 50 miles southwest of Saigon in the Mekong Delta.

At 0630 the next morning RAD 111, with the 3/60th embarked, got underway for the new objective area. At 0807 the riverine craft were ambushed with rockets and heavy automatic-weapons fire at the

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intersection of the Bai Lai river and the Giao Hoa canal, four miles east-northeast of Ben Tre. The awesome firepower of the Navy boats, consisting of 20-mm, 40-mm, .30 caliber and .50 caliber gunfire, silenced the enemy positions and the infantry troops were then landed on the south bank of the Bai Lai river to commence a counterattack. Two Navymen suffered minor wounds during the fire fight. Enemy losses for the two-day operation were very light with one Viet Cong killed, 13 prisoners captured and 34 bunkers destroyed. U. S. Army casualties consisted of two soldiers wounded.

The Tet Offensive

On 27 January, in preparation for the continuation of Operation CORONADO X, the MRB shifted from its anchorage east of My Tho back to Vinh Long. Once again, the MRB demonstrated its tremendous mobility by effecting four major moves within four days by relocating from Vinh Long to Ben Tre to My Tho and finally back to Vinh Long.

The next day the MRF formulated extensive plans and commenced preparations for the scheduled Tet interdiction operations during the Tet Truce period (29 January - 3 February). The operation was designed to interdict anticipated intensification of Viet Cong re-supply efforts in western Dinh Tuong and eastern Kien Phong provinces.

On 29 January the MRF penetrated western Dinh Tuong province,

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established three artillery fire support bases (FSPBs) on the main canals, and bunkered in for the Truce period. The first Truce violation in the area of operations occurred at 2100, just three hours after the Truce period began, when 10 rounds of mortar fire were received by one of the FSPBs.

Due to repeated Viet Cong Truce violations, COMUSMACV rescinded the Truce directive at 0945 on 30 January, less than 16 hours after it went into effect. The cessation of the Truce was followed by reports of massive Viet Cong attacks on My Tho, Ben Tre, Vinh Long and Can Tho in the IV Corps area. As the general situation rapidly deteriorated, contingency plans were immediately put into effect to withdraw to the MRB in order to better react to requests for reinforcements from the beseiged major provincial cities of the Mekong Delta.

On the afternoon of 31 January, two infantry companies of the MRF were airlifted from the area of operations; one to assist in the defense of Vinh Long Airfield, which was under heavy attack, and the other to reinforce the base defenses at Dong Tam. Later that evening the remaining infantry companies, embarked in their riverine craft, conducted a nighttime withdrawal from the Ruong Stream, the scene of a devastating battle on 4 December.

At months end the general situation in the immediate area of the MRF was as follows:

1. In Vinh Long an attack was mounted by an estimated 1,200

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Viet Cong whose order of battle was evaluated as including the 306th and 308th Main Force Battalions (400 men each), the D857 Provincial Main Force Battalion (250 men), the District Consolidated Unit (DCU) Cho Thanh (50 men) and the DCU Tam Binh (50 men). Enemy attacks were launched against the Vinh Long Airfield and from two directions on the city of Vinh Long. Local defending forces included a squadron of the 2nd Armored Cavalry (ARVN), the 43rd Rangers (ARVN), a company of U. S. infantry men from the MRF, plus Vietnamese Navy RAG craft and GAME WARDEN PBRs.

2. At My Tho an estimated 1,200 guerrillas attacked the one-time quiet provincial city. Viet Cong units included the 261st Main Force Battalion, the 263rd Main Force Battalion, the 514th Local Force Battalion, and the 207th Local Company. Principal defending units included a squadron of the 6th Armored Cavalry and a battalion of the 11th Infantry Regiment (both ARVN), supplemented by Vietnamese RAG units and U. S. Navy PBRs.

3. At Ben Tre an attack was launched by Viet Cong forces presumed to include the 518th Main Force and the 516th Local Force Battalions.

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RIVERINE ASSAULT FORCE UNITS

On 3 January a PACV demonstration was held for 18 members of

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the news media. The press party, which included representatives from AP, UPI, ABC and CBS, was briefed on the capabilities of the air-cushioned vehicle by Commander Coastal Divison SEVENTEEN, and also observed a demonstration of the vehicle's ability to operate over land and water.

Meanwhile, on the same day, the PACV ramp, less than a mile away, came under sporadic small-arms fire, which caused a bullet hole in a PACV. This was the first hit sustained during this deployment; however, there was no significant damage and no personnel casualties.

On 12 January USS BENEWAH (APB 35) returned to the MRB after completing a highly successful three-week restricted availability alongside USS TUTUILA (ARG 4), during which time all three ship's service AC generators were replaced. The next day RIVFLOT ONE and the 2nd Brigade staffs moved back aboard the ship along with RAD 112 which assumed the duties as MRB defense force.

Later in the day, Underwater Demolition Team TWELVE, composed of three officers, two civilians and eight enlisted men, arrived at Dong Tam with one of four Aqua Darts to commence an evaluation program. The other three experimental craft were to be airlifted to the MRF at a later date. The Aqua Dart evaluation program was instituted to determine the feasability of utilizing these unique boats for reconnaissance applications with the MRF.

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At 141200, CTF 117 shifted his flag from USS WESTCHESTER COUNTY (LST 1167) to BENEWAH.

On 20 January USS COLLETON (APB 36) returned to the MRB from a restricted availability at the Subic Bay Naval Shipyard, and the MRF once again became fully mobile. All ship's service generators were replaced and ship's alterations included the expansion of on-board medical facilities.

The next day USS WASHTENAW COUNTY (LST 1166) relieved WESTCHESTER COUNTY as the MRF supply support ship.

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NAVAL SUPPORT ACTIVITY, DANANG

Despite numerous hostile fire incidents and enemy attacks, which inflicted a large number of personnel injuries and extensive material damages, Naval Support Activity (NAVSUPPACT), Danang, off-loaded and cleared a record amount of strategically significant equipment and cargo during the month of January. The record-breaking efforts of the NAVSUPPACT personnel, under the most difficult conditions, was indicative of the attitude and professional pride which has been instilled at NAVSUPPACT Danang. A total of 16 new monthly tonnage records were set during January by NAVSUPPACT Danang. Among the records were: 306,743 short ton throughput at Danang, 23,891 short ton throughput at Hue, and 419,888 short ton total throughput for the combined I Corps Tactical Zone ports. Unseasonably good weather throughout the month contributed to the record-shattering performance.

Overall net supply effectiveness for the Danang/Chu Lai support complex increased slightly from 91.5 percent in December to 91.7 percent in January; overall gross effectiveness increased from 87.8 percent to 88.0 percent.

A total of 86,115 line items were stocked by NAVSUPPACT Danang in January. A new NAVSUPPACT Danang Supply Catalog consisting of 11,477 items was published during the month and distributed on 31 January.

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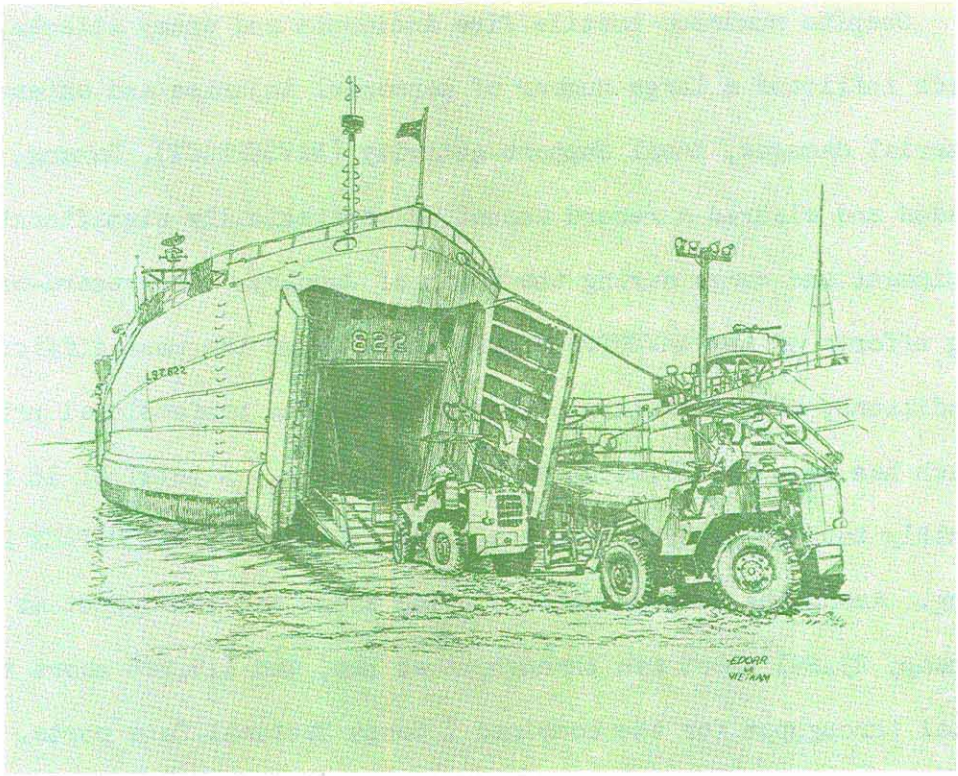

LST 822 unloads its cargo at one of NAVSUPPACT Danang's detachments in I Corps Tactical Zone.

Weather and sea conditions during January permitted normal fuel transfer operations at all sites. During the month two 60,000-gallon capacity AMMI fuel barges and one 10,000-gallon bladder boat were added to the Tan My/Hue and Cua Viet/Dong Ha fuel shuttle assets. Danang fuel facilities incurred light damage during enemy attacks on the 3rd and 30th of January. A total of seven tanks sustained shrapnel or concussion damage and, at month's end, repairs were being made by NAVSUPPACT Danang personnel.

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The Viet Cong initiated an extensive campaign to disrupt U. S. shipping on the Cua Viet River on 20 January. The campaign, which consisted primarily of the mining and ambushing of boats, continued for several days and resulted in one LCM-8 being sunk, eight other boats damaged, two U. S. Navymen killed, and 18 wounded.

On the 20th, two NAVSUPPACT Danang craft received heavy small-arms fire while proceeding from Dong Ha to Cua Viet. Two Navymen were wounded during the incident.

An LCM-8 attached to NAVSUPPACT Danang was mined on the Cua Viet River on 21 January. The explosion of the first mine triggered a second explosion close astern of the craft which destroyed both port engines, blew the starboard engines off their mounts and wounded one crewmember.

On the 22nd, an Army LCU observed two underwater explosions, one forward and one aft of the craft, while transitting the Cua Viet River. The LCU's radios, engines, and generators were rendered inoperative by the explosions. Additional damage included buckling of bulkheads and deck plates and flooding of the engine room. No personnel injuries occurred as a result of this incident.

Also on the 22nd, a NAVSUPPACT Danang LCU observed an underwater explosion which caused minor damage throughout the craft and rendered the radios, radar, and port generator inoperative. No personnel casualties resulted from this Cua Viet River mining attempt.

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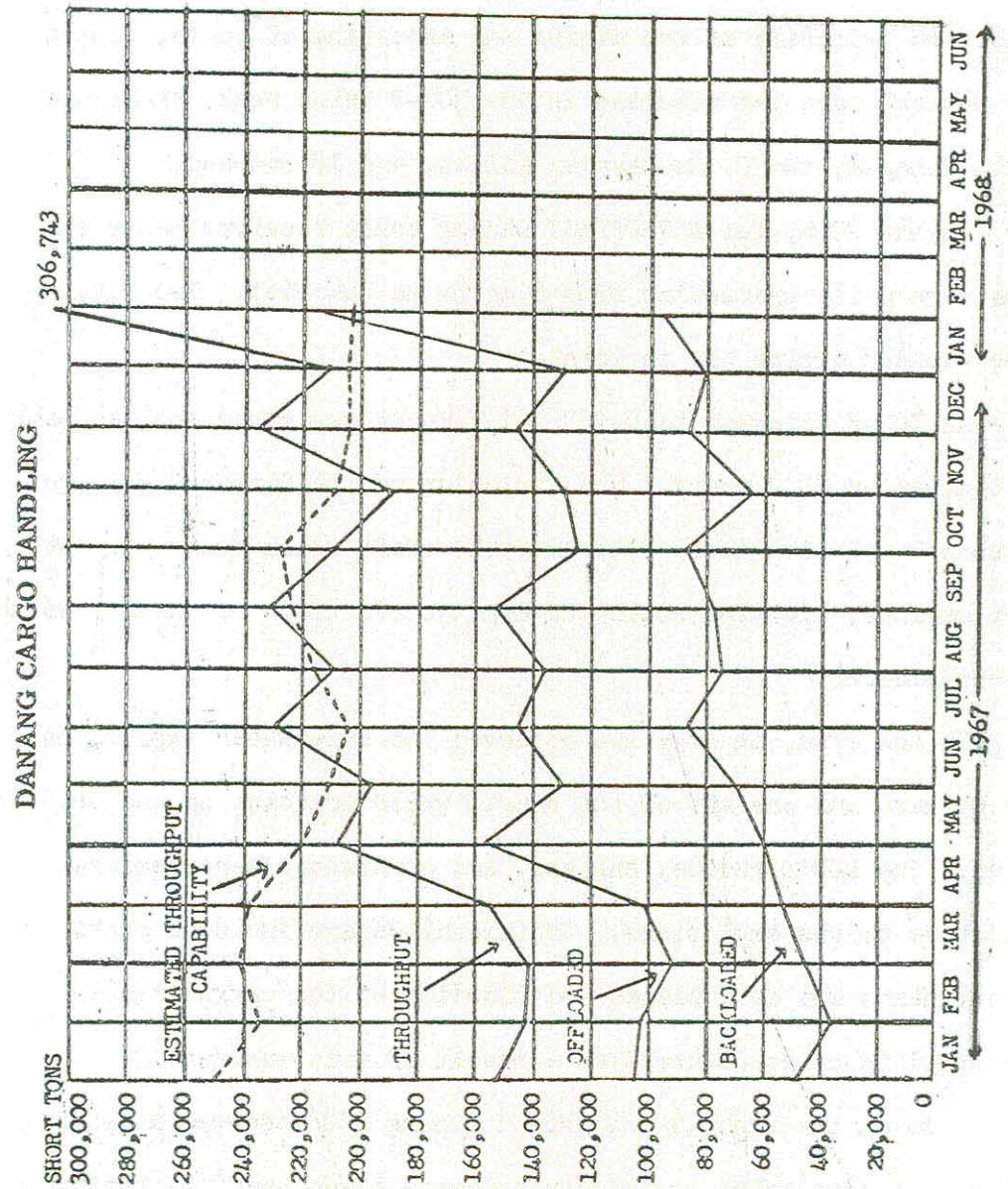

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YFU-62, assigned to NAVSUPPACT Danang, observed an underwater explosion very close aboard while transitting the Cua Viet on the 23rd. The explosion caused extensive damage to the craft's radios, radar and piping. No hull or machinery damage resulted from the mining.

On the 24th an LCM-8 attached to NAVSUPPACT Danang was mined on the Cua Viet River and sank. Two men were killed and two were injured as a result of the mining. The craft's cargo of cement and B-rations was lost. The LCM was following two minesweeping boats and another LCM. Six additional LCMs were following the mined craft at intervals of 50 to 100 yards, and were undamaged.

Also on the 24th, a NAVSUPPACT LCM-6 was mined while sweeping for mines ahead of a convoy. Two crewmembers suffered minor injuries and the craft was disabled by the explosion.

On 25 January a boat convoy en route to Dong Ha from Cua Viet was ambushed by heavy small-arms, rocket and recoilless-rifle fire which originated from My Loc village. During this encounter LCU 1619 received a recoilless-rifle hit in her starboard quarter. The craftmaster and one other crewmember were injured but the LCU was able to proceed to Dong Ha under her own power, accompanied by another LCU. The remaining craft in the convoy, several of which were damaged, and one of which contained five wounded crewmembers, returned to Cua Viet. Air strikes and naval gunfire were called in upon the site of the ambush during the afternoon of the 25th, and

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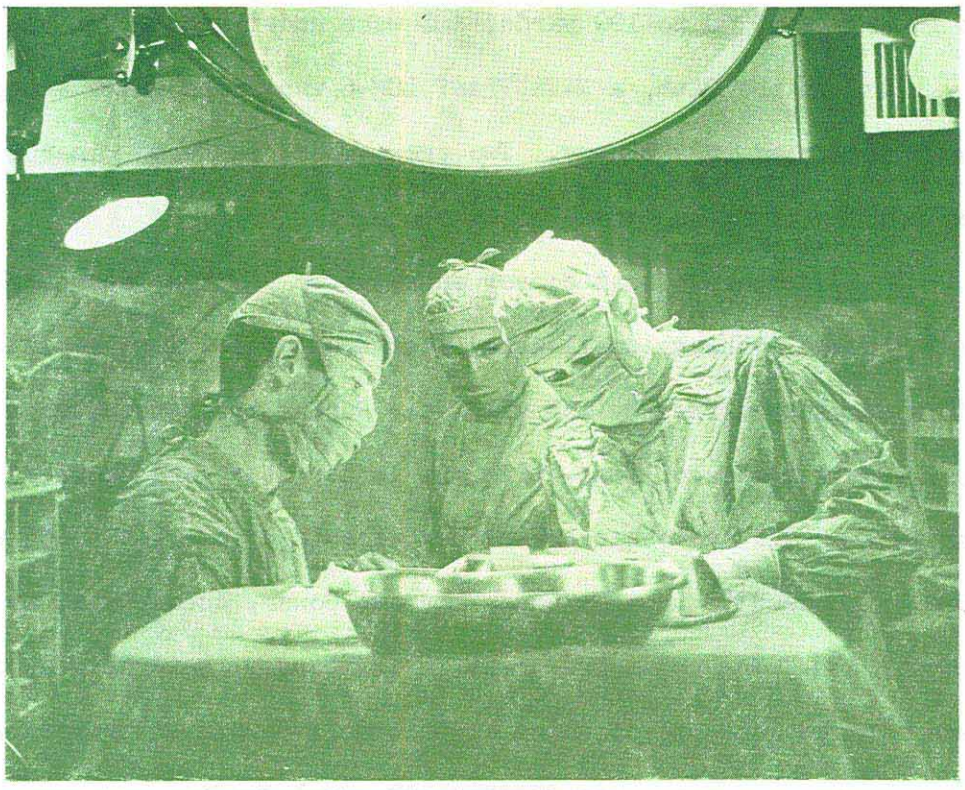
on the 27th normal river traffic resumed with continuous mine-sweeping being conducted by two sweep boats and one patrol boat.

The frequency of rocket attacks on Danang-area facilities was the highest to date with four significant attacks sustained. Major damage to facilities and utilities resulted from the attacks, but was expeditiously repaired by NAVSUPPACT Danang personnel.

Danang harbor security personnel detained 92 junks and 311 suspicious personnel during the month. The craft and personnel were turned over to Naval Advisory Group personnel for further



Lieutenant Commander EARLY (right), USN, operates on a patient while two U. S. Navy enlisted Hospital Corpsmen assist him.

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investigation.

Admissions to the NAVSUPPACT Danang hospital reached a record high during January with 1,357 patients, 657 of whom were battle casualties, admitted during the month. A daily record of patients handled in a 24-hour period occured on 31 January when 139 patients, including 113 combat casualties, were admitted. An additional 140 patients were received and further transferred to other medical activities. One ward of the hospital expansion program was occupied under emergency conditions on 31 January, bringing the total capacity of the NAVSUPPACT Danang hospital to 567 beds.

At month's end, the NAVSUPPACT Danang personnel level was 8,854 and the number of United States and other free world forces supported by NAVSUPPACT was 152,375.

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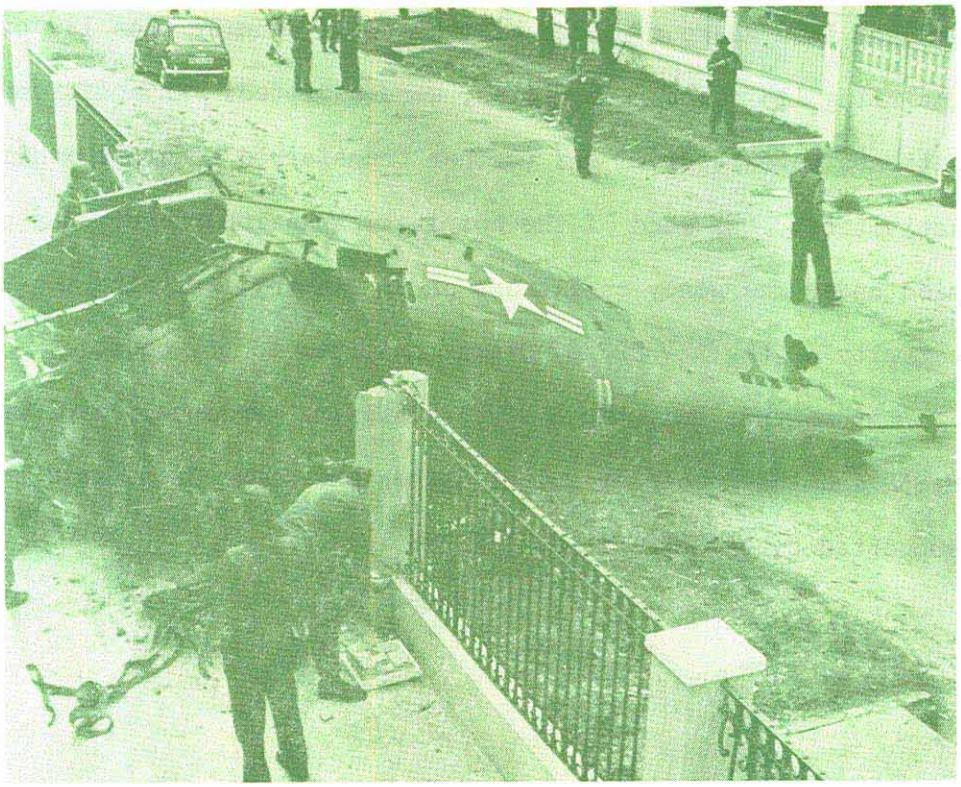

The wreckage of a NAVSUPPACT Saigon UH-34D helicopter lies in an alley in Saigon after an Army helicopter was forced to drop the UH-34D during an unsuccessful salvage attempt.

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NAVAL SUPPORT ACTIVITY, SAIGON

The various detachments of NAVSUPPACT (Naval Support Activity), Saigon, were subjected to intense enemy attacks on 31 January. These attacks, which were part of the Viet Cong's Tet (Lunar New Year) major offensive campaign, caused extensive damage at several of the detachment sites, but all detachments quickly regained at least partial operational status. NAVSUPPACT, Saigon's Vinh Long detachment was the hardest hit of the detachments. Vinh Long's operations center, supply storerooms, and all of the detachment's communications facility were completely destroyed by fire. The detachments experienced sporadic Viet Cong harrassment for several days following the major attacks.

The NAVSUPPACT Saigon detachment at Nha Be also came under enemy attack earlier in the month. Ten rounds of 75-mm recoilless-rifle fire landed in the vicinity of the pier area during the early morning hours of 2 January. The attack, which originated from across the river in the Rung Sat Special Zone, slightly wounded two U. S. Navy personnel and heavily damaged MSB 22. The minesweeper was later surveyed.

NAVSUPPACT Saigon's aircraft inventory diminished as a result of the Viet Cong Tet Offensive. On 31 January a UH-34D helicopter received strike damage while performing an emergency ammunition resupply mission to the NAVSUPPACT Saigon headquarters building.

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While the pilot was attempting to land the aircraft on the roof of the building, ground fire hit the aircraft's tail rotor causing a complete loss of control. Two of the five crewmembers aboard the helicopter were injured (one slight) as a result of the crash. Later, during salvage operations by an Army CH-47 (Chinook) helicopter, the ill-fated UH-34D became entangled in the building's roof structure and the CH-47 pilot was forced to drop the Navy helicopter, which fortunately fell into the yard of a nearby apartment house causing minor property damage, but no injuries. Two NAVSUPPACT C-117s also were damaged on the 31st during the Viet Cong attack on Tan Son Nhut Air Base. One of the aircraft received only superficial damage; however, the second received serious damage that necessitated its being flown to NAS Cubi Point, Phillipines, for repairs. On 1 February all scheduled logistics flights were suspended until further notice and all remaining available aircraft were utilized to fly only combat essential airlift missions in an effort to help repulse the Viet Cong offensive.

A total of 3,688 passengers and 475,616 pounds of cargo were transported by NAVSUPPACT Saigon aircraft during January. During the same period, assigned surface craft transported a total of 2,038 short tons of cargo.

During January, NAVSUPPACT Saigon's overall gross and net material support effectiveness decreased slightly from December's

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figure to 64.4 percent and 79.3 percent respectively.

The inquiry into Army Common Item Listing (CIL) support by the Inspector General (IG) of the First Logistical Command was completed during January. The effectiveness of the corrective actions recommended by the IG were not measurable at month's end because of the turmoil generated by the country-wide Viet Cong attacks. It was the intention of the Army to support only 393 of the original General Use Consummable List items through their facility at Vung Tau. At month's end CIL support was still considered unsatisfactory, and an alternate support program was being developed by NAVSUPPACT Saigon.

At month's end an integrated, updated River Patrol Boat (PBR) MK1 and MKII Depot Level Maintenance Load List had been developed by NAVSUPPACT Saigon. The list set forth the hull, mechanical, electrical and electronics material requirements to provide support for activities performing depot level maintenance. New parts have been identified and were being ordered for stock. The YR-9, which will be positioned at Vinh Long, will use the integrated list as its stocking guide.

Action was continuing to expedite the procurement of PBR parts which were in short supply during the month. The part support posture was improving with air shipments of priority parts being effected from CONUS. Items which were under close monitoring were

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springs, gasket kits, fiberglass kits and exhaust valves.

During January the Secretary of the Navy approved the Meritorious Unit Commendation for the USS TUTUILA (ARG 4) for vital logistic support provided U. S. and other Free World forces during the period 17 July 1966 to 1 September 1967.

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THIRD NAVAL CONSTRUCTION BRIGADE

During the month of January unseasonably good weather enabled the Naval Mobile Construction Battalions (MCBs) to accomplish a significant amount of strategically important construction. Construction during the last few days of the month, however, was hampered by the heavy fighting which erupted during the Vietnamese New Year (Tet) period.

Among the many construction projects completed by the Seabees during the month were approximately 6.5 miles of pipeline along Route 551, which connected the storage facility at Hue with the port of Tan My, and a 3,000-barrel storage tank at Hue. These projects were completed by MCB 3 which also completed four bridges on the Hue by-pass road and several other projects during the last month of its deployment at Phu Bai.

MCB 5 completed five large modules in the Ammunition Supply Point at Dong Ha, thereby doubling its capacity. An extension of a messhall, 100 tin roof huts, five butler buildings, a bakery and a fire station were among other projects completed during January by MCB 5 in the Dong Ha cantonment area.

At Chu Lai, MCB 6 completed a primary power substation in addition to completing three 40- by 100-foot butler buildings, and an ammunition supply point for the Army's Americal Division. The first section of the permanent electric power system was also

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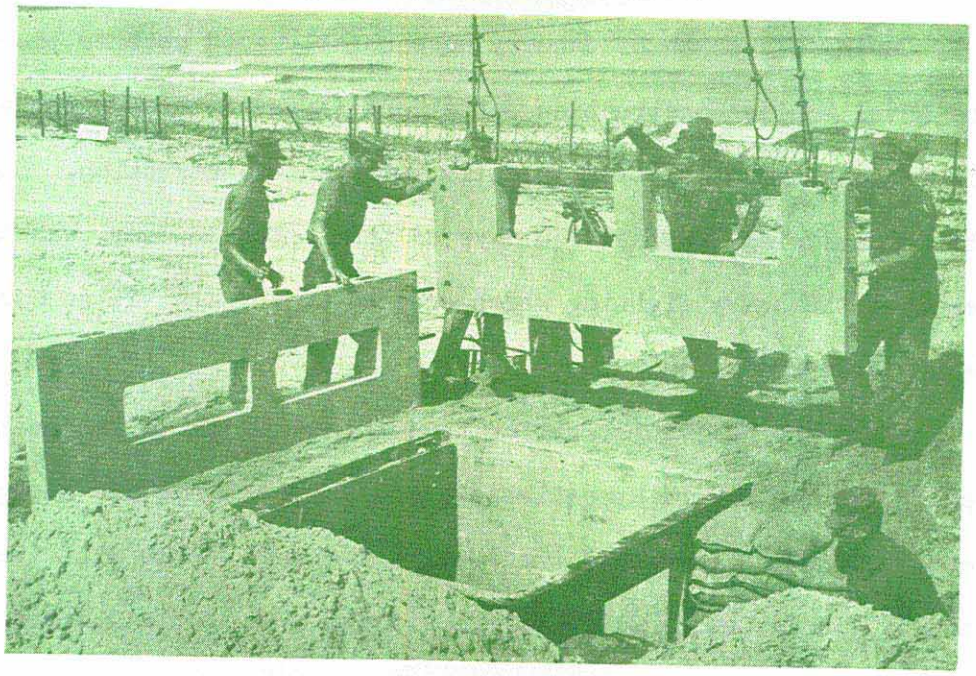

Seabees construct one of a series of berms to be used to separate ammunition stockpiled in the Dong Ha area.

energized during the month.

Prior to being relieved by MCB 53, MCB 7 completed the Naval Support Activity Danang blood bank and urology building. Other projects completed by MCB 7's Danang-based Seabees included an operating services building, an armory and the third increment of the Camp Tien Sha barracks rehabilitation project.

MCB 9, working from its Danang camp, completed a 375-foot approach bridge to the Liberty Bridge, and continued work on the main bridge which will span the Thu Bon River.

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At Quang Tri, MCB 10 completed the soil cementing for a 90,000 square yard helicopter pad during the month. This formidable project was completed in less than two weeks. Two supply warehouses and 30 tin roof huts were also constructed during the month by the Seabees of MCB 10. When the Army's 1st Cavalry Division moved into the Quang Tri area during January, MCB 10 became involved in numerous direct combat support projects, including pioneer roads, tactical fueling stations, a helicopter parking pad, and a dirt airstrip. At Khe Sanh, a detachment of MCB 10 completed a 16- by 72-foot dispensary, eight 16- by 32-foot tin roof huts, and a generator shed. The detachment also installed two generators and temporary distribution lines to all buildings at the Special Forces Camp.

During the month, General William C. WESTMORELAND, Commander, Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, visited Camp Haskins at Danang to review several modified precast concrete bunkers which may be used by free world forces in Vietnam. The newly designed precast bunkers were constructed by MCB 58. General WESTMORELAND was accompanied on his inspection tour of the bunkers by Lieutenant General Robert E. CUSHMAN, Commanding General, Third Marine Amphibious Force, and Lieutenant General Hoan Xuan LAM, Commanding General, Vietnamese Forces in I Corps.

Possibly the largest project of the month was the completion of a Helicopter Repair Facility for the Army's 1st Air Cavalry

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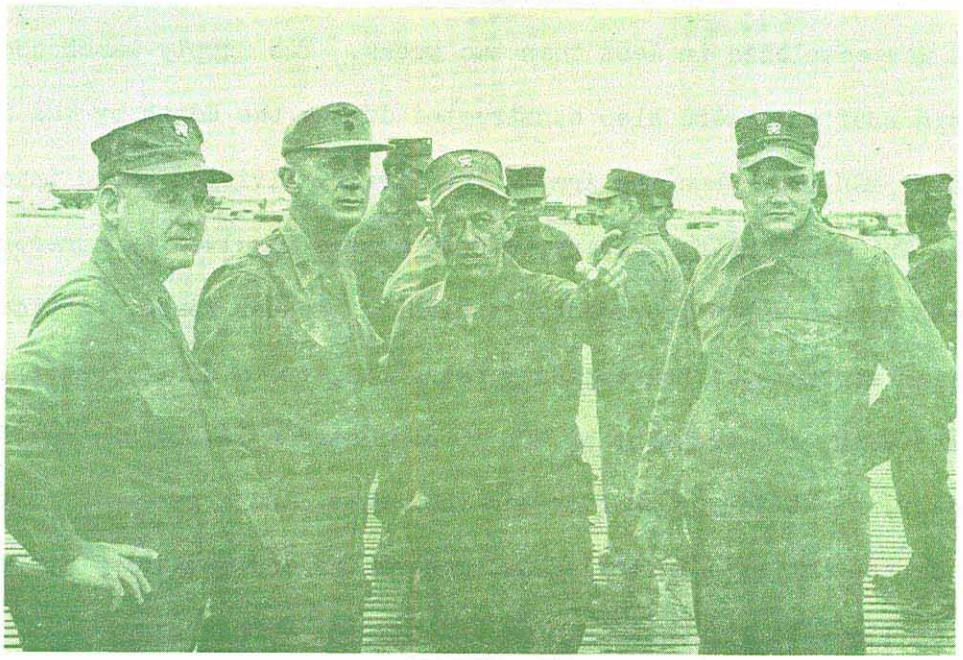

Commander G. H. SCHLEY, CO of MCB-74 points out some of the aspects of the construction effort of the Red Beach Helicopter Pad to LCOL V. C. EMERSON, (second from left), Commander, 15th Transportation Corps Battalion. Others in the picture are Commodore C. W. TURNER, (left), Commander, 30th Naval Construction Regiment and LCDR E. W. THOMAS, (right), MCB-74 Operations Officer.

Division. MCB 74 was primarily responsible for this project which was constructed adjacent to the Seabees' Camp Haskins at Danang. The facility was turned over to the Deputy Commanding General of the 1st Air Cavalry Division, by Rear Admiral James V. BARTLETT, Commander, 3rd Naval Construction Brigade, during a ceremony on 15 January. Throughout the construction of the facility, MCB 74 received various types of assistance from MCBs 7, 9, 58, 62 and 128.

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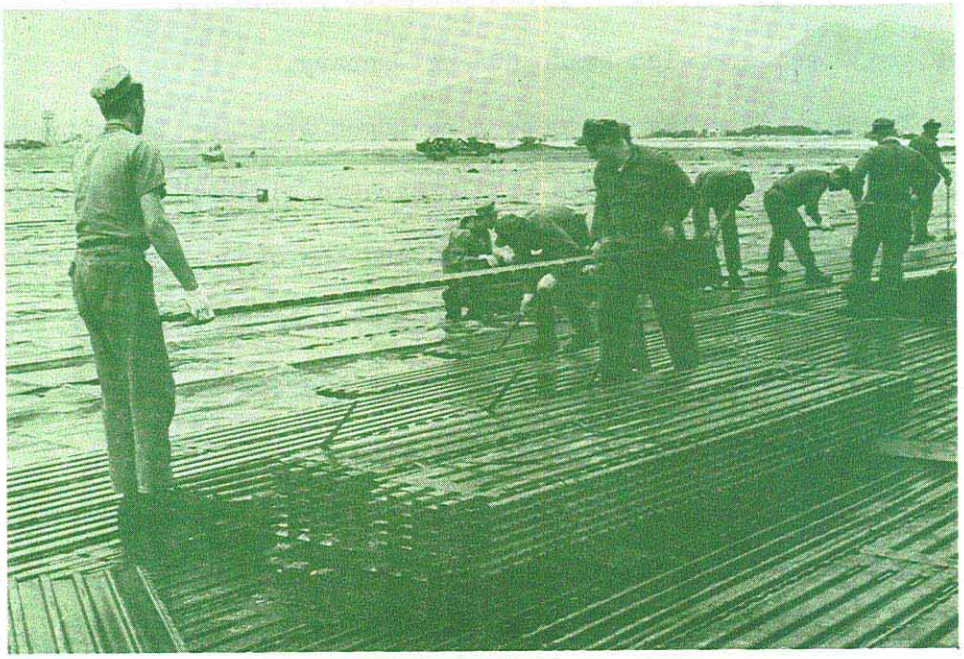

Seabees prepare to place a section of matting at the Helicopter Maintenance Facility for the 1st Air Cavalry at Red Beach.

Another helicopter facility at Phu Bai was completed by the Seabees of MCB 121. The 60,000 square meter facility was turned over to the Army at the end of January. Among other projects completed by MCB 121 during the month were four bridges on Route #1 between Phu Bai and Phu Loc.

MCB 128 completed several important projects during the month. These projects included a rigid frame shop building for the NAVSUPPACT Danang small craft repair facility, two 20- by 120-foot two-story wooden frame barracks and a 4,416 square foot headquarters

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building for the Army's 212th Aviation Company.

In addition to the numerous projects completed, many significant projects were also begun during January.

Two high priority projects were begun at Quang Tri city by MCB 10. One of the projects was the Integrated Wideband Communication System facility at the MACV compound and the other was the rehabilitation of the electrical and plumbing systems at the Quang Tri hospital. This latter project was being sponsored by CORDS as part of the aid program for the Quang Tri area.

In Chu Lai MCB 40 and MCB 6 were combining forces to construct a 400-bed hospital expansion for the Army's 44th Medical Brigade. The first phase, which at month's end was 75 percent complete, consisted of three 50-bed wards, X-ray buildings, laboratory extensions, central supply room expansion, a BOQ and two barracks. MCB 40 was also continuing work on the cargo handling facilities for NAVSUPPACT Danang's Chu Lai detachment. MCB 6 had completed one-third of the Chu Lai primary power distribution system at month's end.

Enemy attacks on base camps and work sites continued to inflict extensive damages and numerous personnel injuries during January. Enemy attacks during the month resulted in three Seabees being killed and 47 wounded. An MCB 6 Seabee was killed near Tam Ky on 4 January when enemy groundfire hit the helicopter in which he was a passenger. An MCB 9 Seabee was killed on 14 January when an enemy grenade was

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thrown into the security bunker which he was occupying at a construction site near Danang. The third Seabee death was a result of an enemy rocket attack on MCB 3's camp at Phu Bai on 31 January. Booby traps, road mines, hostile small-arms fire and rocket and mortar attacks on the camps and work sites of MCBs 3, 5, 10, 58 and 53 caused the injuries to the 47 wounded Seabees.

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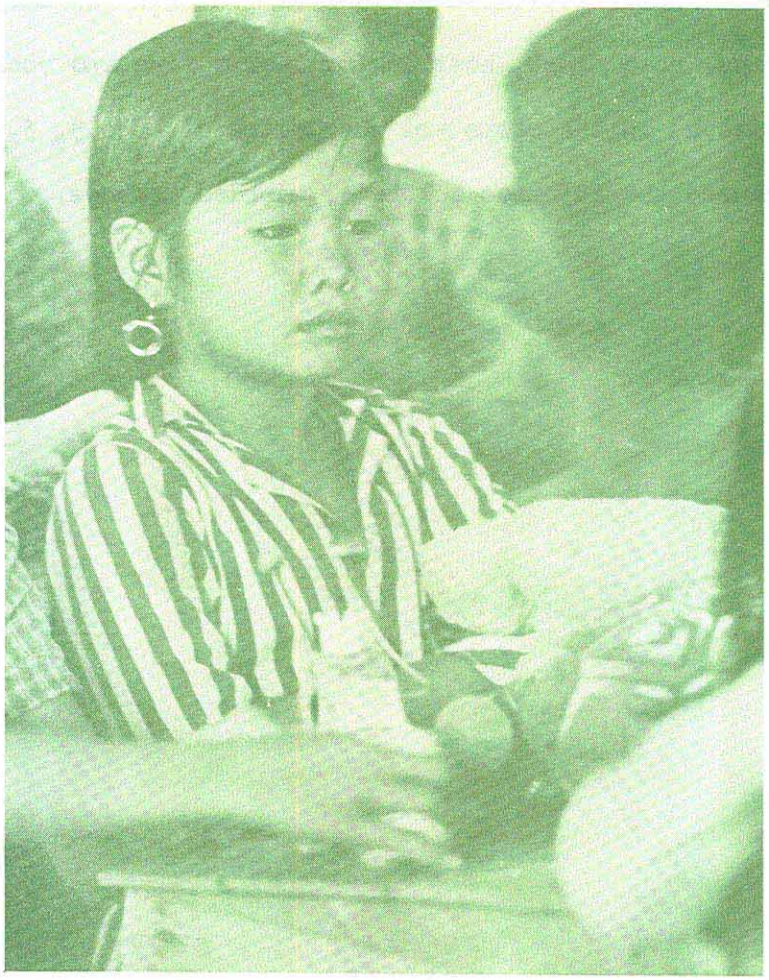

A school girl of Tan Thanh village appears mystified by the huge teddy bear and other toys, clothes and needed goods given to her and her friends by the people of Sacramento, California via the U. S. Navy sailors of River Patrol Boat Section 542.

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MILITARY PSYCHOLOGICAL AND CIVIC ACTION OPERATIONS

The 1968 Tet Psychological Operations Campaign began on 1 January with the distribution of printed material designed to instill a desire for unity under the National Government. U. S. Navy units conducted loudspeaker broadcasts providing entertainment, news and Chieu Hoi appeals throughout the coastal and riverine areas. The holiday season of Tet (Vietnamese Lunar New Year), celebrated 30 January through 1 February, provided a significant opportunity for psychological exploitation being a time of family reunions. Marking the first time that a major U. S. ship conducted broadcasts, the USS LUZERNE COUNTY (LST 902), a logistical support ship operating in the IV Corps Tactical Zone, participated while transitting the Mekong and Bassac Rivers.

There were definite indications that the Viet Cong had placed an increased emphasis on countering friendly psychological operations. It was reported that the enemy had ordered the people to destroy all allied leaflets distributed in Viet Cong-controlled areas. The guerrillas were ordered to fire on aircraft engaged in psychological operations and to assassinate the cadre associated with it. This apparent Viet Cong emphasis on countering the friendly operations was indicative that the program was adversely affecting the enemy's ability to maintain control of the population. On 22 January, two junks from Coastal Group 37 received heavy automatic-weapons fire

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as a Vietnamese Navyman made a live broadcast in Kien Hoa province.

Task Force 117 conducted waterborne speaker missions from assault craft during three different Mobile Riverine Force operations. The missions were conducted en route to, and in the area of, operations in Dinh Tuong and Kien Hoa provinces. The waterborne speaker missions were quite effective in comparison to aerial speaker missions which were somewhat distorted due to the rapidly moving speaker platform. It was noted that the messages broadcast were understood and not ignored by the residents along the waterways as they listened attentively and responded by waving and with applause. It was estimated that a total of 21,500 persons were reached by the tape recorded messages during the six days of operations aboard the assault craft.

In addition to their primary mission of prosecuting the war, Navy units continued to perform Civic Action projects throughout the country. In honor of the Tet celebrations, parties were held and presents distributed to the children. In the Second Coastal Zone Coastal Group 26 entertained 1,250 children. All the parties included games, refreshments and usable gifts of soap, toothpaste, toys and candy to each child. Each Coastal Group in the Third Coastal Zone has assumed a civic action project as the program continues to improve. The majority of the civic action performed around the junk bases was in the form of self-help projects wherein

the villagers do most of the work. In this manner the participants are instilled with a pride of accomplishment. Fifteen tons of soap received from CARE was supplied to the Coastal Zone Advisors and PBR River Sections for further distribution to the needy villagers along the coast and in the Delta. The Vietnamese Navy continued to attend to the needs of their countrymen. In the Fourth Coastal Zone the Vietnamese hospital ships conducted medical civic action projects in 12 villages. There were 3,439 medical, dental and surgical patients treated. In addition, food and clothing was distributed to 5,650 needy families.

On 4 January, after having just completed a MEDCAP and delivery of school supplies at Tan Duong village, located five miles northwest of Sa Dec, PBRs from River Section 513 came under enemy attack. An estimated squad of Viet Cong opened fire on the patrol boats and the Vietnamese outpost with automatic weapons and rifle grenades. The PBRs immediately shifted from their role of humanitarian back to that of a fighting unit and engaged the enemy. The Viet Cong fire was soon suppressed and the PBR sailors evacuated two wounded Popular Force troops and assisted in extinguishing fires started in the village by the enemy grenades.

In the Rung Sat Special Zone, River Section 542 continued to support a village that they had adopted last September. Although not unique, it typifies the interest that navy units have in the

people of this war-torn country. The PBR sailors make frequent visits to the village bringing medical assistance and needed goods. The poor villagers accepted clothes, shoes and toys from their friends, the PBR sailors and those that they had never met--the citizens of Sacramento, California. Through the instigation of LT Ronald J. CALHOUN, USN, assistant officer-in-charge of the River Section, and his father, Mr. William G. CALHOUN, president of the Southeast Sacramento Kiwanis Club, "Project Vietnam" was started. Much needed supplies were soon en route to Vietnam for those in need in a gesture of friendship.

Throughout the country, whether it be near a Mobile Construction Battalion camp or at Seabee Team sites, the "can do" Seabees continued their splendid efforts to aid and teach villagers and refugees so that they too might be able to proudly say "can do".

The following is a tabulation of certain civic action projects conducted during January by U. S. and Vietnamese naval forces.

PROGRAMS:

	Man Days	Expenditures(VN$)
Economic Development	25	2,500
Education	440	82,774
Social Welfare	1,155	1,375,921
Transportation	102	111,020
Refugee Assistance Support	138	1,500
TOTALS	1,860	1,573,715

VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS: VN$ 102,942

US/FWMAF ASSISTANCE TO GVN PROGRAMS:

	Number	Type of Assistance
Market Place	1	Material
Latrine	1	Technical Advice

INSTITUTES ASSISTED:

	Number
Hospitals/dispensaries	42
Schools	13
Orphanages	4
Others	4

PERCENT OF U. S. CIVIC ACTION PROJECTS CONDUCTED JOINTLY WITH:

	Percent
Other FWMAF	5.4
RVNAF	3.0
U. S. civilian voluntary agencies	7.3
Average percent of self-help by VN civilians	43.0

Remarks:

Reporting period is 26 December 1967 - 25 January 1968.

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The Greek-registered merchantman SS IOANNIS "K" hard aground on the southwest tip of Cape St. Jacques (Vung Tau).

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SALVAGE OPERATIONS

On 4 January SS IOANNIS "K" ran hard aground on the southwest tip of Cape St. Jacques (Vung Tau). Harbor Clearance Unit ONE salvage units, based at Vung Tau, and U. S. SEVENTH Fleet salvage ships, USS DELIVER (ARS 23) and USS LIPAN (ATF 85), rushed to the scene to commence salvage operations.

On 6 January HCU 1, Team FOUR personnel commenced diving operations which revealed that most of the ship's double bottoms were open to the sea and that the engine room was flooded. After eight days of exhaustive salvage operations, which were seriously hampered by 20-25 knot winds and high seas, the disabled ship's owners decided that salvage operations on the Greek-registered freighter were economically unfeasible. The U. S. Navy was released from all responsibility for the stricken ship and the salvage operation was terminated on 13 January.

On 8 January HCU 1, Team ONE, embarked in YLLC-4, arrived at My Tho to resume salvage operations on the sunken Tan Thach ferry landing. The flooded pontoon was 60- by 52-feet across the center and weighed approximately 300 tons. The pontoon was divided into nine separate compartments, several of which were ruptured by the Viet Cong explosion which had sunk the landing. After several days of patching the ruptured compartments, the pontoon was dewatered and brought to the surface on 18 January, completing another successful salvage operation.

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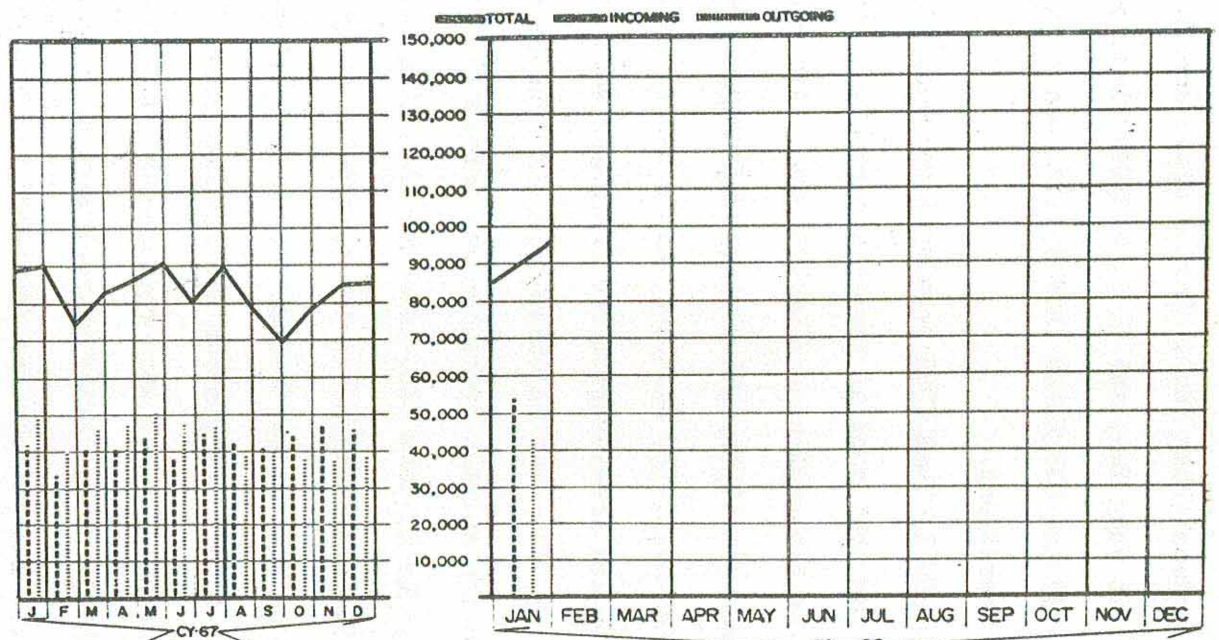
MONTHLY MESSAGE TRAFFIC



J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D		JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
1	1	1	1	1	.2	.5	9	1.4	1.3	1.3		FLASH	2.2	3.0										
21	20	19	18	16	17.5	18.1	17.9	21.2	23.3	19.7		IMMEDIATE	21.3	23.0										
60	61	63	63	66	64.6	62.9	61.6	57.3	57.4	58.9		PRIORITY	56.3	57.2										
18	18	17	18	17	17.7	18.5	19.6	20.1	18.0	20.1		ROUTINE	20.2	16.8										

PERCENT OF TOTAL

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COMMUNICATIONS

Project CLARINET SEAWARD (formerly Project SEARCHLIGHT) showed little progress during the month; however, on 17 January the GAME WARDEN base at Sa Dec reported the project site was ready for installation. Progress at the Qui Nhon site was delayed due to construction personnel being utilized to improve the defensive posture of the MARKET TIME base. A revised ready-for-installation date of 15 February was estimated for the Qui Nhon site.

On 19 January, the commanding officer of the Naval Shore Electronics Engineering Activity, Pacific (NAVSEEAPAC) stated that an inventory team would arrive in-country on 15 February and visit all sites to determine electronic equipment shortages, if any, and to verify construction dates. NAVSEEAPAC's position stated that the electronics installation team would not return to South Vietnam until at least six sites were sufficiently constructed to guarantee beneficial occupation of the installation team.

On 31 January-1 February, Vinh Long City was overrun by the Viet Cong during the Tet Offensive campaign. The NAVSUPPACT Vinh Long villa and the PBR base were evacuated, and the communications equipment installed at the PBR base was destroyed to prevent its falling into enemy hands. This vulnerability to attack brought about a reevaluation of the desirability of installing fixed communications assets at Vinh Long.

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The Project CLARINET TACK (formerly Project STARBOARD TACK) VHF/UHF vans arrived in-country; however, the VHF frequency modification kits, required due to a late change in frequency assignment, were not scheduled to arrive until February. Power converters for the TRC-97A vans were also expected to arrive at the same time. The latest estimated award of contract date for the Lenkhurt Microwave vans is 19 February, with an estimated delivery date of 6 September 1968.

During the month of January, the COMNAVFORV Message Center handled a total of 96,158 messages, an increase of 9,245 messages over the December total.

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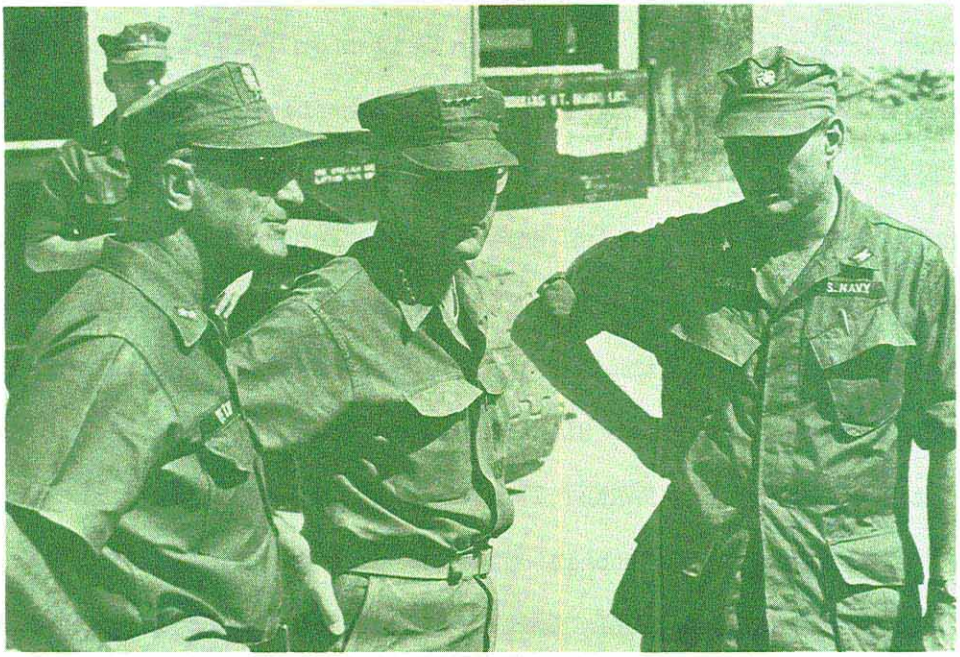
ORGANIZATION AND COMMAND

On 8 January General Leonard F. CHAPMAN, Jr., Commandant, U. S. Marine Corps, visited the Mobile Riverine Force (MRF) at Dong Tam, and was briefed on the riverine concept and plans for expansion of the MRF. General CHAPMAN also took a tour of several of the riverine assault craft.



General Leonard F. CHAPMAN, Jr., (center), Commandant, U. S. Marine Corps, and Rear Admiral Kenneth L. VETH, (left), USN, COMNAVFORV, listen to Captain Robert S. SALZER, USN, Commander Task Force 117, as he explains the concept of the Mobile Riverine Force at the MRF's headquarters at Dong Tam.

Two days later, Rear Admiral Norvell G. WARD, USN, Commander

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Service Group THREE/Commander Task Force 73, arrived in South Vietnam for six days of tours and briefings. Included in Rear Admiral WARD's itinerary were visits to the Saigon headquarters of COMNAVFORV and Commander Naval Support Activity Saigon, as well as to the naval facilities at Cam Ranh Bay, Vung Tau, An Thoi, Danang and the Mobile Riverine Base at Dong Tam. Rear Admiral WARD was primarily interested in all aspects of general logistical support and resupply.

Rear Admiral James B. OSBORN, USN, prospective Commander Naval Support Activity Danang, arrived in Saigon on 25 January and commenced a four-day indoctrination and orientation tour of naval activities in Vietnam. Rear Admiral OSBORN's schedule included visits to Navy units at the Coastal Surveillance Force (CTF 115) headquarters and the Naval Air Facility at Cam Ranh Bay; the USS BENEWAH (APB 35), flagship of the MRF (CTF 117); the River Patrol Force (CTF 116) headquarters at Binh Thuy; the Coastal Surveillance Center at Nha Trang; the MARKET TIME base at Qui Nhon; and Danang.

On 28 January the Mobile Riverine Base was visited by Vice Admiral Sir Alan McNICHOLL, Chief of Staff of the Royal Australian Navy, and Major General A. L. McDONALD, Australian Army, prospective Commander Australian Forces Vietnam. Both visitors were briefed on the riverine warfare concept, and conducted a short inspection of the riverine craft. The following day Vice Admiral McNICHOLL visited the Naval Support Activity at Cat Lo, where he received a briefing on

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STABLE DOOR and MARKET TIME operations.

On 3 January Captain J. M. AUSTIN, USCG, relieved Captain William N. BANKS, USCG, as Commander Coast Guard Activities Vietnam/ Commander Coast Guard Squadron ONE. The change of command ceremonies took place at the An Thoi MARKET TIME base on Phu Quoc Island in the Gulf of Thailand.

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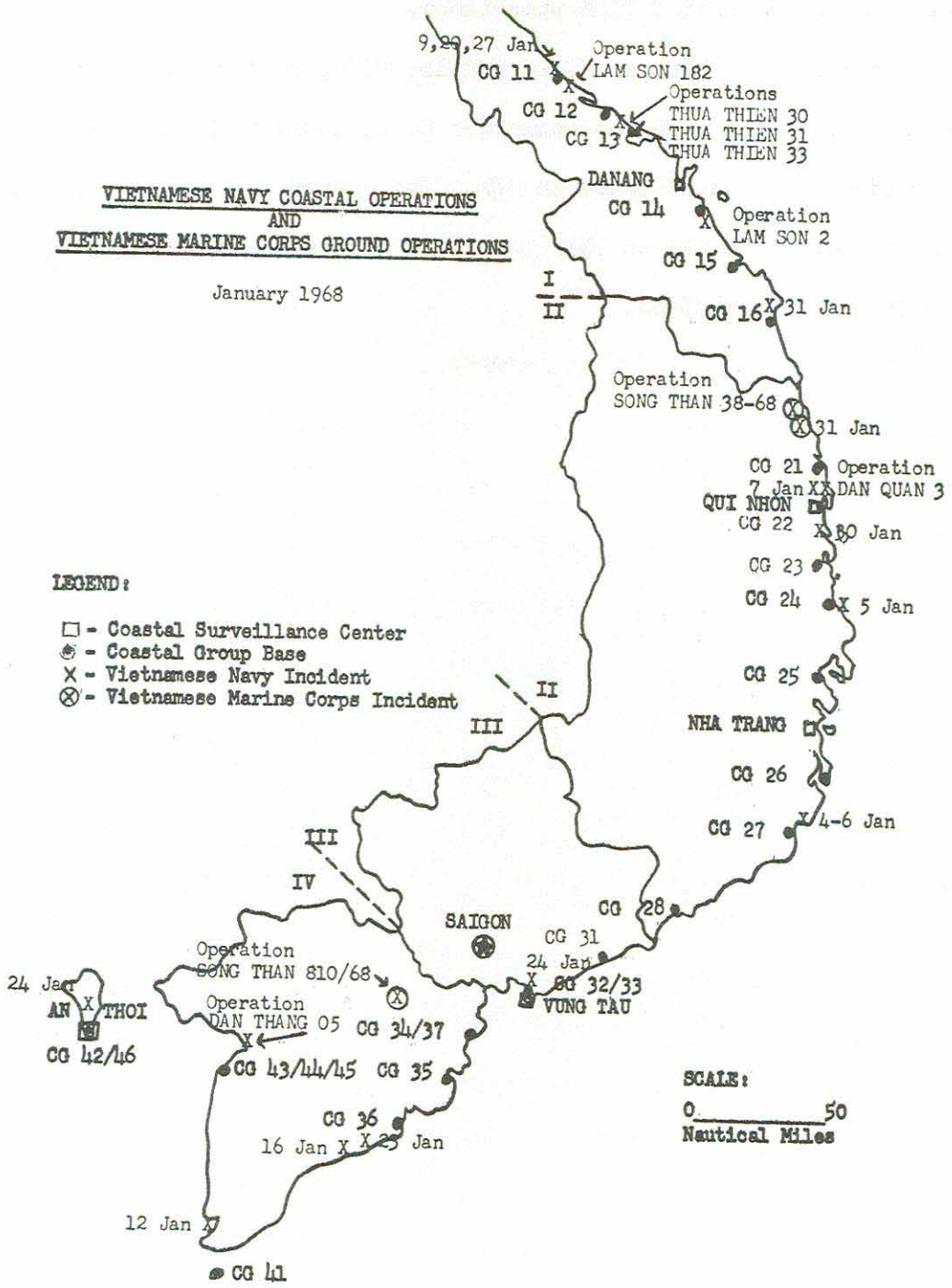

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FOREIGN NATIONALS

NAVAL ADVISORY GROUP

VIETNAMESE NAVY

The personnel strength of the Vietnamese Navy (VNN) on 31 January could not be determined due to the commencement of the enemy's offensive on 31 January. The attack on Saigon reverberated throughout South Vietnam as coincidental attacks were launched against the major cities of the Mekong Delta. The Tet Offensive occured when most of the VNN personnel were home celebrating this auspicious time of year. Defense posts were overrun and cities were affronted by the Viet Cong. Consequently, communications between most VNN units and the VNN headquarters, which itself came under vicious attack by a Viet Cong demolition squad, were nonexistent.

At 0300 on 31 January a 13-man Viet Cong "Sapper" squad drove up in civilian cars, killed the two VNN barricade guards, and then assaulted the VNN headquarters building in downtown Saigon. Two Viet Cong, in a suicidal effort, detonated a TNT charge on the main building wall. Eight Viet Cong then attempted a second assault on the building and were killed by the combined firepower of the VNN and Vietnamese Military Police. Two Viet Cong were ultimately captured and the one remaining Viet Cong escaped during the furious fire fight.

The VNN's Underway Training Unit completed training programs

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for four VNN ships during January. A patrol craft escort (PCE 06) and an Infantry Landing Ship Large (LSIL 328) completed one week of inport training and one week of underway training. Two patrol motor gunboats (PGMs 600 and 613) underwent one week of inport training.

On 16 January the VNN Advanced Training Center, Saigon, graduated 45 men from the Warrant Officer Course with the VNN Chief of Naval Operations and Senior Advisor, VNN, in attendance at the ceremony. Radarman "A" School graduated 19 men on 27 January and, at the VNN Naval Training Center, Nha Trang, 26 men graduated from Radioman "A" School on 20 January.

Fleet Command

During January the Fleet Command had a daily average of 25.4 ships available and maintained 14 ships off the coast of South Vietnam, five ships on river patrol and one ship on convoy escort duty on the Mekong river between Vung Tau and Tan Chau. The month's operations included MARKET TIME and river patrols, psychological warfare and civic action visits, minesweeping and escort patrols and gunfire support missions. Fleet Command ships fired 56 naval gunfire support missions, searched 1,003 junks and 4,152 persons and detained two persons in January.

Patrol craft (PCs and PCEs), utilized in all four Naval Zones, and gunboats (PGMs), patrolling the Fourth Naval Zone and the Rung

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Sat Special Zone (RSSZ), conducted 28 naval gunfire support missions during January. On 24 January PGM 609 accounted for 15 Viet Cong killed while providing gunfire support for a joint operation conducted on Phu Quoc Island with Coastal Group 42 units, a PCF and a Civilian Irregular Defense Group (CIDG). On the morning of 31 January, at the request of Coastal Group 16, PCE 08 conducted a gunfire support mission four miles east of Quang Ngai which resulted in 20 Viet Cong killed and 10 wounded.

Landing Support Ships (LSILs and LSSLs) provided patrol, gunfire support and convoy escort missions in the RSSZ, the Third Naval Zone and the Fourth Riverine Area. These ships fired 28 gunfire missions during January. On 5 January LSSL 230's gunfire killed three Viet Cong and wounded five others nine miles northwest of Chau Phu near the Cambodian border in support of Fourth Riverine Area forces.

Coastal minesweepers (MSCs) maintained their watch, patrolling the coast of South Vietnam in the Third and Fourth Naval Zones. The motor-launch minesweepers (MLMSs) continued their highly important sweeps along the Saigon, Long Tau, Nha Be and Dong Nai Rivers.

In January the VNN's Underwater Demolition Team (LDNN) detachment at Saigon conducted nightly hull inspections of the ships berthed at the Port of Saigon. The other two detachments at Binh Thuy and Nha Be continued operations with U. S. Navy SEALs in

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search and ambush missions in the Fourth Riverine Area and the RSSZ. At 0400 on 18 January SEALs and LDNN captured one Viet Cong, two grenades and two clips of ammunition. One SEAL was wounded in this action. Later that day, on the southern bank of the My Tho river, 13 miles east of My Tho, another SEAL/LDNN team killed one Viet Cong and wounded two others.

Coastal Force

In January the Coastal Force searched 32,291 junks and sampans and 97,195 persons, detaining four junks and 188 persons. On a daily average 87.7 percent of the force's 191 available junks were on patrol.

In the First Naval Zone Coastal Force junks continued to be employed in combined operations with Vietnamese Army (ARVN) forces and Regional Force/Popular Force (RF/PF) troops. On 3 January Operation THUA THIEN 30 was conducted by three RF companies, two PF platoons and units of Thua Thien Province. The operation, conducted seven miles east of Hue and supported by Coastal Groups 12 and 13, resulted in one Viet Cong killed and three captured along with one K-50 and one M-1 rifle. That same day the Coastal Group 14 base at Hoi An was taken under heavy automatic-weapons and small-arms fire. The Coastal Group's 60-mm and 81-mm mortars, combined with support fire from PGM 616 and aircraft strikes, silenced the enemy. A Coastal Group 14 reaction force was dispatched, returning with one

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Viet Cong suspect.

On the morning of 9 January Coastal Group 12 units conducted a police action, composed of three junks and a small boat, in the Perfume river at Hue. During the four-hour operation, 26 persons were searched and two were detained. That evening Coastal Group 11 provided troop lift and blocking support for "A" Company, U. S. Marine Corps (USMC) AMTRAC Battalion, as the Marines conducted a raid on a village at the mouth of the Cua Viet river. One Viet Cong and one Vietnamese civilian informant were killed and one weapon was captured. On 18 January Coastal Groups 12 and 13 returned to the land area seven miles east of Hue, across Than Lam Bay, and conducted Operation THUA THIEN 31 with one RF company and two PF platoons. The combined operation resulted in three Viet Cong, one carbine and one submachine gun captured and 11 Viet Cong suspects detained.

About 0400 on the 20th Coastal Group 11 junks, patrolling on the Cua Viet River, supported Dai Loc hamlet with machine gun and mortar fire and directed USMC artillery fire into the positions of the Viet Cong force attacking the hamlet. Coastal Group 11 and USMC reaction forces were met by an estimated four companies of the enemy. By 1400 the outnumbered sailors were forced to with draw south to the river, while the Marines, to the east, were able to hold their positions until the enemy retreated. Thirty Viet Cong

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were killed in the engagement and one man rallied under the Chieu Hoi program. Four VNN sailors were killed and 18 others, including two U. S. advisors, were wounded. During the following two days eight mines were detonated in the Cua Viet river in the vicinity of Dia Loc hamlet, sinking one U. S. Navy LCM 8 and damaging three LCUs, one LCM 6, one LCM 8 and one civilian craft. In addition, one junk was damaged by 57-mm recoilless-rifle fire.

A Coastal Group 14 ambush team came in contact with an estimated Viet Cong company on 21 January near their base camp at Hoi An. Supported by a PCF and aircraft strikes, the squad withdrew from the area as another Viet Cong platoon was discovered. The aircraft received heavy ground fire as suppressing fire was returned. Enemy casualties were unknown; one VNN sailor and one PF soldier were killed and three VNN, three PF soldiers and three civilians were wounded. The next day three junks from Coastal Group 14 provided a blocking force and troop lift support for Operation LAM SON 2. The sweep, composed of a Coastal Group 14 platoon, one Quang Da Sector Provincial Reconnaissance Unit (PRU) team and one National Police team, supported by a USMC artillery unit, resulted in 15 enemy fortifications destroyed. One U. S. PRU advisor was killed and one civilian was wounded; enemy casualties were unknown.

At 0800 on 22 January Operation THUA THIEN 33 commenced with

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Coastal Group 13 and two RF companies. The operation, which swept the area east of Than Lam Bay, near Hue, lasted one and one-half days and resulted in the capture of five Viet Cong and two deserters, and the detention of 21 Viet Cong suspects. The ARVN units suffered one killed and five wounded. At the same time, Operation LAM SON 182 was being carried on by Coastal Group 11, nine miles northeast of Quang Tri. The Coastal Group units, together with the ARVN 1st Infantry Regiment, killed two Viet Cong and captured six.

On 27 January a Coastal Group 11 junk was mined while escorting a Naval Support Activity Danang Cua Viet convoy. One VNN sailor was wounded and the junk received considerable hull damage; it was beached and ultimately declared unsalvageable. Later that same day elements of Coastal Group 11, USMC 1st AMTRAC Battalion and a PF platoon dispersed a Viet Cong loudspeaker team near the Cua Viet river mouth. A sweep of the area was made with no further contact.

On the night of 30-31 January, as a preface to the Tet Offensive, Danang and most of the First Naval Zone Coastal Groups were committed against Viet Cong elements. A patrol from the Danang Naval Base killed 10 Viet Cong, captured five of the enemy and sank 30 sampans. At 2100 the Coastal Group 14 base and a PF outpost at Hoi An came under Viet Cong attack and were provided support by PCE 07 and aircraft strikes. Beginning at 0800 on 31 January, units

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of Coastal Group 12 conducted land operations seven miles east of Hue. Withdrawing at 1100 the Coastal Group detained eight Viet Cong suspects and numerous Viet Cong flags and propaganda were seized.

Junks of the Second Naval Zone continued coastal patrols, search and destroy/ambush operations with RF and ARVN troops, and civic action operations throughout their area of responsibility. Enemy contact during January was light; intelligence reports hinted constantly of impending enemy attacks and suspected troop movements. The elusive Viet Cong remained under cover, coming forth to harass the local people, obtain food and recruit men. Between 4 and 6 January a Coastal Group 27 squad conducted a search and destroy operation nine miles northeast of Phan Rang with units of the local sector police. The two-day sweep resulted in the detention of 10 Viet Cong suspects.

On 5 January a junk from Coastal Group 24 capsized after its rudder was broken in high seas, five miles east of Tuy Hoa. Two VNN sailors searched around the submerged wreck in vain for a fellow shipmate. Salvage operations were delayed until the sea subsided. On the 7th Coastal Group 22 detained 71 Viet Cong suspects and seized one carbine while participating in a search with an ARVN company just north of Qui Nhon. The soldiers captured six Viet Cong, detained 572 suspects and seized two automatic weapons, 138

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pistols, 300,000$VN ($2,542.00), $265.00 and a large quantity of foodstuffs.

From 11 through 16 January four junks and two squads of Coastal Group 22, two Special Forces companies, five RF companies and one PCF conducted Operation DAN QUAN 3 in Binh Dinh province, five miles northeast of Qui Nhon. Three Viet Cong were killed, six Viet Cong suspects were detained and several weapons seized. On 30 January, the eve of the massive Tet Offensive, a Coastal Group 22 patrol junk detained 42 Viet Cong suspects, searched one junk on Vinh Quang Lake, seven miles south of Qui Nhon, and captured numerous weapons, documents, flags and banners.

On 3 January, in the Third Naval Zone, a Coastal Group 35 ambush team captured one Viet Cong and three flags on Long Hoa Island in the Co Chien river. That same day a resident of the Long Toan Secret Zone rallied to the government of South Vietnam, turning himself over to Coastal Group 35 personnel after being influenced by the Coastal Group's nightly Chieu Hoi broadcasts.

On 7 January a Coastal Group 34 ambush team was inserted near the southern-most tip of Kien Hoa province where intelligence reports had indicated Viet Cong were gathered. A sweep of the area resulted in one Viet Cong wounded, several Viet Cong suspects detained and a sampan, with numerous articles of clothing and equipment, captured. On 14 January four patrol craft from Coastal

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Group 34/37 provided gunfire support to an outpost near their base on the north bank of the Ham Luong river. Three Viet Cong were sighted running on the beach and were taken under fire. Popular Force troops, inserted later, confirmed the three Viet Cong were killed and their weapons were seized.

A Coastal Group 35 junk on a psychological operations mission in the Co Chien river.

Operation HAI LONG 1 was conducted on Loi Quan Island in the My Tho river on 16 January. Coastal Group 33 junks, two VNN ships and two ARVN Infantry companies combined to kill seven Viet Cong

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and capture numerous grenades and documents. Two ARVN soldiers were killed and one was wounded. On 20 January Coastal Group 34/37 units, one RF company and a PF platoon made an area sweep in Kien Hoa province, two miles northwest of the mouth of the Ham Luong river. Two Viet Cong were killed, two suspects were detained and a mine and bunker were destroyed. That afternoon, acting on information from a Hoi Chanh, two squads of Coastal Group 34 landed one-half mile southeast of the area searched by the morning sweep to ambush a suspected Viet Cong meeting. Four Viet Cong suspects were detained, at least one of which was a prospective rallier.

That same day, on Con Co Island in the Co Chien river, a Coastal Group 35 ambush team, responding to local intelligence, made contact with an unknown number of Viet Cong. One of the enemy was killed and one grenade and several documents were captured. On 23 January two Coastal Group 36 junks transported a 44-man PRU unit to Con Dien Island in the Bassac river. Intelligence gathered from a previous operation provided a list of Viet Cong names in a hamlet which the PRU team ambushed. A search of the area resulted in the capture of seven Viet Cong and two Viet Cong suspects; one PRU member was wounded. Meanwhile, Operation THAN PHONG 14/11 was conducted on the same day by units of Coastal Group 35, Riverine Assault Group (RAG) 23, 10 PBRs and one U. S. Navy LST. The combined force transported 150 troops of the ARVN

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14th Infantry Regiment to a two-mile area on the southern bank of the Co Chien river, two miles north of Phu Vinh. The subsequent sweep resulted in three Viet Cong killed and one captured; ARVN units suffered one killed and eight wounded.

On 24 January Coastal Group 32/33 conducted an operation 10 miles north-northeast of Vung Tau in Phuoc Tuy province that resulted in the destruction of a Viet Cong base camp. Intelligence had indicated that Viet Cong were based in the area but, upon insertion of the Coastal Group ambush party, the base was discovered deserted. The camp appeared to be of sufficent size to support a 25-man unit. The shelters and equipment were destroyed. At 0400 that day, two Coastal Group 36 units inserted a 50-man PRU team on the northern tip of Dung Island in the Bassac river. Led by a Hoi Chanh, who knew the area and the local Viet Cong infrastructure, the PRUs made contact with the enemy, killing two Viet Cong and capturing four. Late that evening another 50-man PRU team was transported to the same area by Coastal Group 36 junks. This second area sweep captured two more of the enemy.

On 26 January Operation CHI LAND 6/68 netted five Viet Cong killed, one wounded and numerous weapons captured. The search and destroy operation was conducted in Vinh Binh province at the mouth of the Co Chien river where Coastal Group 35 units inserted PF troops. On the morning of the Tet Offensive, 31 January, Coastal

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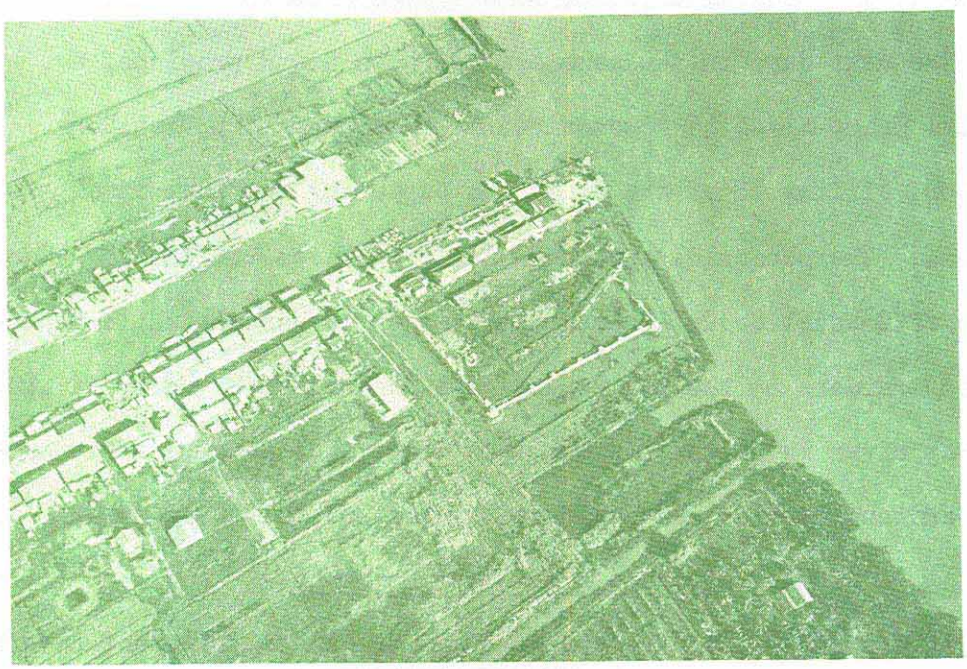
Group 35 personnel landed, two miles north of Phu Vinh, on the Co Chien river. The Coastal Group sweep yielded one Viet Cong killed, two Viet Cong and two sampans captured and 13 Viet Cong suspects detained.



An aerial view of the Coastal Group 43/44/45 base at Kien An.

In the Fourth Naval Zone, on 8 January, a junk from Coastal Group 43/44/45 base engaged five Viet Cong aboard a sampan on the Cai Lon river, five miles south of Rach Gia. All five Viet Cong were killed and the contents of the sampan, an M-2 carbine, nine grenades, eight magazines and numerous documents, were captured.

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Later that day two Coastal Group 44 units landed an eight-man ambush team in the same vicinity. Three VNN sailors were killed in the ensuing fire fight. Supporting Coastal Group junks chased a fleeing sampan down the Cai Long River until it beached and the Viet Cong escaped into the woods. Assorted weapons, ammunition, documents and medical supplies were seized from the sampan.

The next day, in the same area of Kien Giang province, a Coastal Group 43/44/45 reconnaissance team engaged a Viet Cong platoon, killing 18 of the enemy and capturing two individual weapons. The reconnaissance team suffered three VNN killed. Two junks of Coastal Group 42 were attacked on 12 January while transporting raiders to the Hai Yen Special Zone near the mouth of the Bay Hap river in An Xuyen province. Three Viet Cong in three sampans and one carbine were captured by the Coastal Group junks.

Riverine Area Naval Commands

At the end of January the RAGs and the River Transport Escort Group (RTEG) had 225 craft assigned; a daily average of 150 craft were available for operations and 129 were employed. An average of 33 craft were employed daily in support of amphibious operations. The remainder of the river craft were deployed on river patrols, static defense and province assignments. The RAGs searched 4,927 junks and 15,581 persons during January. At the close of the month riverine forces in the Third and Fourth Riverine Areas were

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chiefly engaged in defensive operations to counter the Viet Cong Tet Offensive. Six additional craft, four LCVPs and two LCMs, continued to be assigned to the I Corps Tactical Zone as an augmentation force to Perfume River patrol duties. Later these six craft were employed by Coastal Group 12 to support the ARVN 1st Division at Hue.

In the Third Riverine Area a RAG 24 patrol craft conducted a night ambush on the Vam Co Dong river on 3-4 January. A Viet Cong sampan, with three occupants, attempted to cross the river, 17 miles south-southwest of Saigon, and was sunk by the RAG 24 craft's gunfire. Two Viet Cong were captured while the third escaped. Operation CHANH NGHIA 121/7 was conducted by the ARVN 7th Infantry Regiment and five RAG 24/28 craft in Gia Dinh province, four miles northeast of Saigon from 4-14 January. Three Viet Cong were killed, two captured and various weapons seized. One ARVN soldier was killed and nine were wounded during the operation.

On 9 January 14 river craft of RAG 24 supported ARVN forces during Operation AN DAN 06/68, an area sweep on the Vam Co Tay river, 20 miles southwest of Saigon. Five Viet Cong suspects were detained. That same day seven RAG 30 craft and the ARVN 5th Ranger Group conducted a search and destroy operation 11 miles northeast of Saigon on the Dong Nai river. Two Viet Cong were killed in this action while one ARVN soldier was killed. On 13 January 10 river

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craft of RAG 27 supported units of the ARVN 50th Infantry Regiment during Operation AN DAN 05/68. This operation, in the vicinity of the Vam Co Dong river, 15 miles southwest of Saigon, resulted in three Viet Cong killed, one captured and nine suspects detained. ARVN casualties were three killed and 22 wounded.

Six river craft of RAG 30 and the ARVN 5th Ranger Group conducted search and destroy operations in Bien Hoa province, seven miles east of Saigon, on 19 January. A fire fight late that day resulted in three Viet Cong killed, one junk destroyed and numerous weapons captured.

Operation AN DAN 16/68 was conducted by the ARVN 50th Regiment and nine RAG 27 craft on 19 January to reduce the enemy's presence in Ben Luc District. The area sweep along the Vam Co Dong river, 15 miles southwest of Saigon, killed 52 insurgents and one North Vietnamese Army (NVA) soldier, captured two Viet Cong and 12 individual weapons and detained two suspects. Three ARVN soldiers were killed, 25 wounded and five others declared missing. For the next two days five RAG 24/28 craft conducted Operation CHANH NGHIA 121/BD on the Saigon river, six miles north of Saigon, with units of Binh Duong Province. The sweep force destroyed five sampans and 14 grenades; Viet Cong casualties were unknown.

Another ARVN search and destroy operation was conducted on 28 January along the Vam Co Dong river with units of RAG 27 providing

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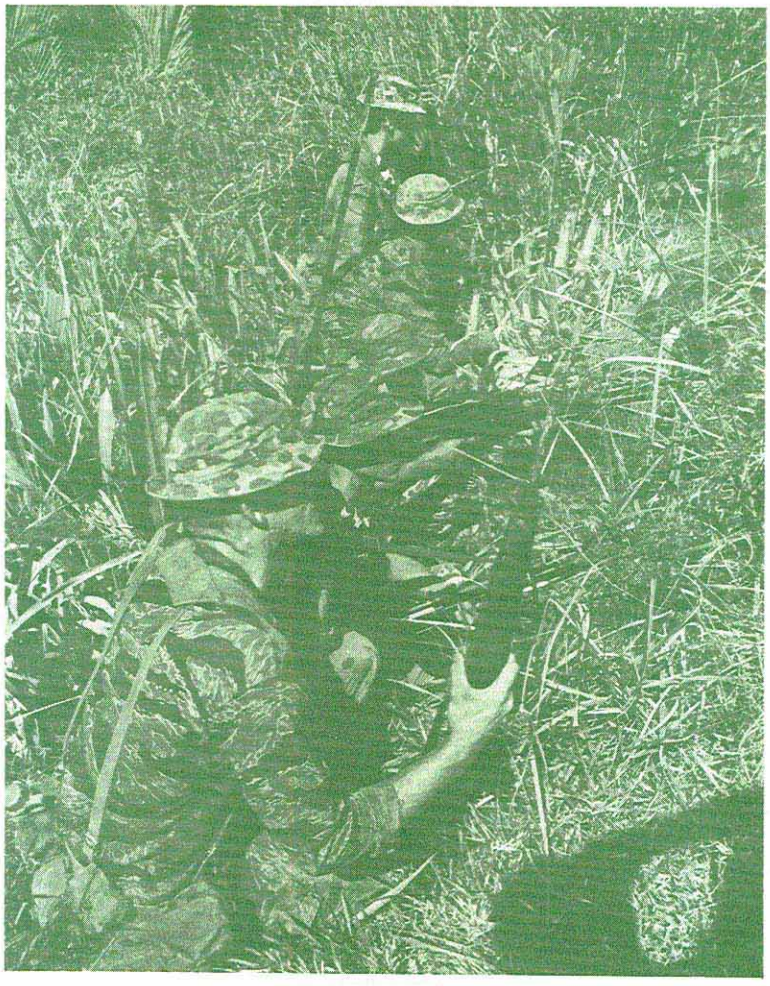
the blocking force. Three Viet Cong and 25 bags of rice were captured as a result of this area sweep.

In the Rung Sat Special Zone RAG 22 and Regional Force Commandos continued their search and destroy/ambush operations in conjunction with RF/PF, U. S. and Free World Forces. On 10 January two enemy base camps in the RSSZ were destroyed by a combined force



Vietnamese Regional Force Commandos, with their U. S. Marine Corps advisor, set up an ambush in the Rung Sat Special Zone.

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under the control of the RSSZ Commander. U. S. Army spotter aircraft located the camps and directed RF troops embarked in RAG 22 craft to the area. U. S. Army and Navy helicopter fire teams provided area cover and close air support to the troops and an ARVN 105-mm battery fired into the enemy area as the troops departed. Six Viet Cong were killed, five individual weapons were seized and two camps, containing 12 buildings, two sampans and four tons of rice, were destroyed in the 10-hour operation.

A RF Commando squad was inserted 15 miles southeast of Saigon on 19 January by PBRs for a night ambush. The PBRs and a U. S. light helicopter fire team provided support as the commandos ambushed a Viet Cong listening post. Six Viet Cong were killed; graves and blood trails were sighted and numerous bunkers and shelters destroyed. A land mine, 250 meters of wire and a Chinese Communist grenade booby trap were captured. At 1300 on the 20th a RF company was inserted in the same area to sweep the withdrawal routes from the previous night's ambush. A base camp, consisting of four bunkers and three sampan docks, was located and destroyed. No contact with the enemy was made but fresh footprints were noted. Another base camp was located on the 24th, 16 miles southeast of Saigon. River craft of RAG 22 and three RF companies combined forces during Operation DONG TAM 3 to destroy six rows of houses and capture one sampan, six mines and quantities of sugar, rice, beans and tobacco.

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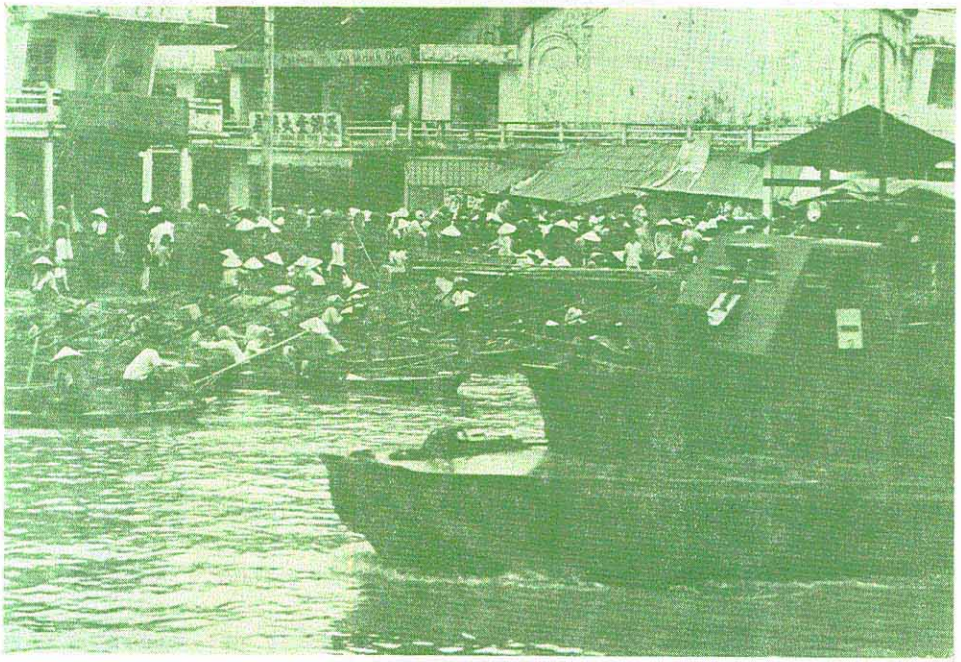
In the Fourth Riverine Area RAG 25/29 craft supported Phong Dinh Province forces during Operation DAN CHI 622/PD on 3 January, 10 miles south of Can Tho. Ten Viet Cong were killed, two were captured and two submachine guns and numerous documents were seized. Less than two miles to the southeast 13 craft of RAG 25/29 conducted Operation DAN CHI 985/CT with the ARVN 21st Infantry Regiment. Nine Viet Cong were captured, 12 suspects detained and numerous weapons and mines captured. Operation LONG PHI 9/144 was conducted by the



Hundreds of Vietnamese gather at the market place in the once Viet Cong-controlled village of Minh Duc, in Vinh Long province, as a Vietnamese Navy River Assault Group 31 river patrol craft provides security by patrolling the Mang Thit River.

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ARVN 9th Division and 16 craft from RAGs 23, 25, 26, 29 and 32 on 5 and 6 January. The operation swept the west bank of Tan Dinh Island in the Bassac river, resulting in seven Viet Cong killed and nine captured; ARVN forces suffered eight wounded in action.

RAG 23/31 craft and PF troops killed 28 Viet Cong on 6 January during Operation NGO QUYEN, a three-mile sweep of the Mang Thit river, 11 miles southeast of Vinh Long. The RAG boats landed the PF troops in the area and then searched sampans on the river for enemy infiltrators or supplies. A total of 27 sampans were stopped and three Viet Cong suspects were detained. The sweep uncovered a Viet Cong ammunition factory and numerous weapons were seized.

RAG 31 craft, on 8 January, carried units of Sa Dec Province to the Nha Man Canal, east of Sa Dec, to begin Operation NGUYEN TRAI 45. The units were inserted on the south bank of the canal along a five-mile area between Sa Dec and Vinh Long. RAG craft provided blocking and patrolling services while the units ashore swept the area. Ten Viet Cong sampans were captured, two bunkers and a 10-structure Viet Cong village were destroyed during the operation.

On 16 January a Saigon-to-Bac Lieu convoy, escorted by five river craft of the RTEG, was attacked with B-40 rocket fire, 11 miles northeast of Vinh Loi in Bac Lieu province. An 81-mm mortar

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mount on a monitor was hit and four VNN sailors were wounded. One civilian junk was sunk, two were damaged, one civilian was killed and one wounded. On 23 January another convoy was hit by the enemy when a tug was sunk by a mine, 23 miles northeast of Vinh Loi. One civilian was wounded and another was reported missing.

From 21 to 23 January seven river craft of RAGs 26 and 32 conducted Operation DAN THAN 05 with the ARVN 43rd Ranger Battalion, three RF companies and one platoon of PF troops in Kien Phong province, north of Rach Gia. Eight Viet Cong were killed, 26 suspects detained and eight Viet Cong captured along with two junks, several weapons and numerous documents. On the night of 31 January, the beginning of the Tet Offensive, all RAGs in the Fourth Riverine Area were engaged in troop lifts, evacuation and logistic lifts in support of the cities of Can Tho, My Tho, Vinh Long and Chau Doc.

Logistics

In January the VNN conducted 24 logistics support missions and lifted a total of 2,618 tons of cargo and 2,552 personnel. Tank Landing ships (LSTs) carried 1,349 tons of cargo and 380 personnel; medium landing ships (LSMs) carried 657 tons of cargo and 340 personnel; utility landing ships (LCUs) handled 580 tons of cargo and 1,752 personnel and light cargo ships (AKLs) lifted 32 tons of cargo and 80 personnel. During the month the VNN Supply Center had a gross effectiveness of 74.9 percent on a total of 8,076 requests

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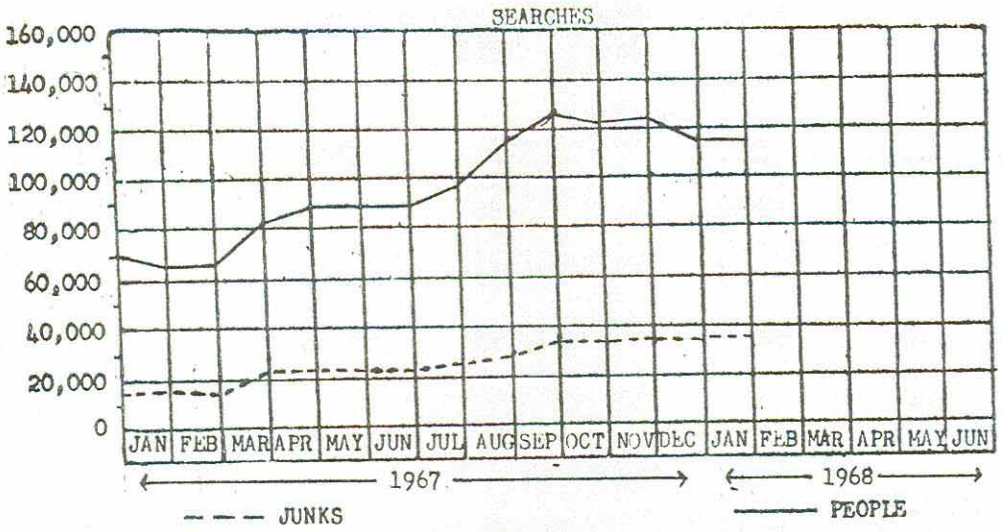
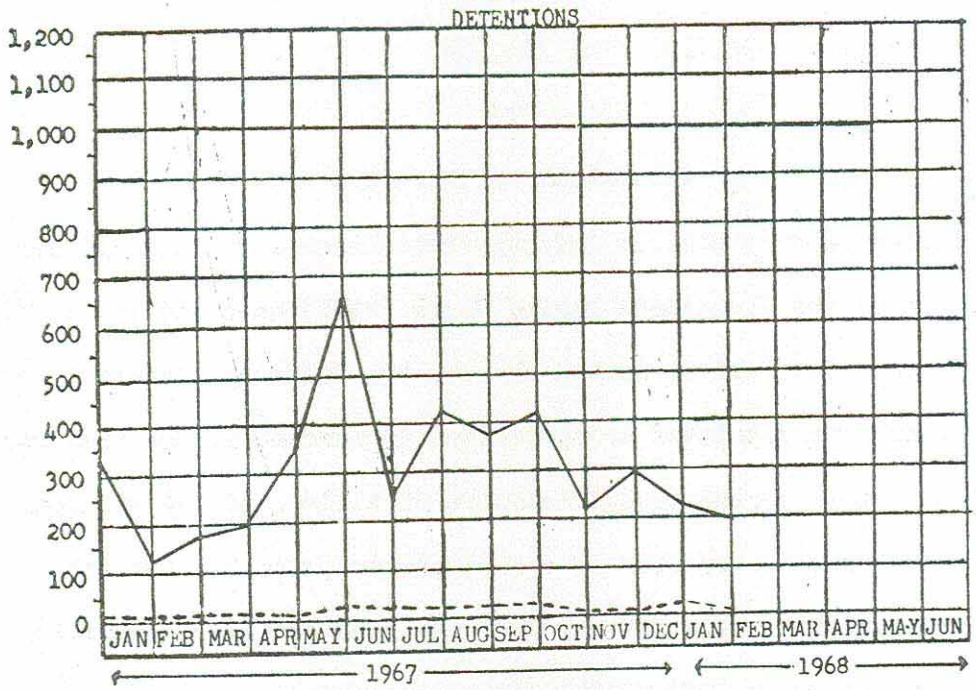
SEARCHES AND DETENTIONS
BY VIETNAMESE NAVY SEA, COASTAL AND RIVERINE FORCES





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for items and a net effectiveness of 86.7 percent on 6,974 requests for items normally carried in the supply system.

Vietnamese Navy Statistical Summary
January 1968

Coastal Force	Searched		Detained	
	Junks	People	Junks	People
I NZ	12,414	33,048	0	62
II NZ	8,241	22,486	4	126
III NZ	7,953	31,115	0	0
IV NZ	3,683	10,546	0	0
Sub-totals	32,291	97,195	4	188
Fleet Command Patrol Ships	1,003	4,152	0	2
Riverine Area Craft	4,924	15,581	0	7
Totals	38,218	116,928	4	197

***

VIETNAMESE MARINE CORPS

During January the six Infantry battalions and one artillery battalion of the Vietnamese Marine Corps (VNMC) operated in II, III and IV Corps Tactical Zones and the Capitol Military District. The battalions were committed to operations 95 percent of the time during the month. Marine casualties were 68 killed and 261 wounded.

Task Force A, composed of a headquarters, the 3rd and 4th Infantry Battalions and Battery C of the VNMC Artillery Battalion, continued Operation SONG THAN 38-68, a search and destroy/road security mission in Binh Dinh province in II Corps. Enemy contact

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during the month was light and sporadic. On 11 January the 6th Battalion relieved the 3rd Battalion which then returned to the Thu Duc base camp. Squad- and company-sized operations were conducted in which little or no enemy contact was made and largely negligible results were reported. The 5th Battalion relieved the 4th Battalion which was then airlifted to the base camp at Vung Tau. A company-sized operation on 31 January, 34 miles southwest of An Khe, resulted in 70 Viet Cong suspects detained.

Meanwhile, Task Force B, composed of a headquarters, 1st and 2nd Infantry Battalions and Battery B, VNMC Artillery Battalion, continued Operation SONG THAN 810-68, west of My Tho. Under the operational control of the ARVN 7th Infantry Division, the Marines had heavy contact on the 1st and 2nd and on the 19th and 20th of January.

On 1 January, during an operation, 26 miles west of Dong Tam, the 1st and 2nd Battalions partially surrounded the Viet Cong 261st Main Force Battalion. The close-contact, small-unit battle ended on the 2nd when the enemy dispersed and evaded to the north leaving 85 of their number on the field; eight Viet Cong were captured, 14 suspects detained and 71 weapons seized. The Marines had 28 killed and 83 wounded. On the night of the 19th approximately three companies of the enemy's 261st Main Force Battalion attacked the positions of the 1st Battalion and Battery B, 15 miles west of Dong

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Tam. The combined mortar, rocket and infantry attack was beaten back by the Marines supported by U. S. Army helicopters and U. S. Air Force flareships. The Marines killed 37 Viet Cong while suffering 20 men killed, 66 wounded and one man missing. Villagers along the enemy's escape route reported that 40 sampans bearing dead or wounded Viet Cong passed during the morning of the 20th.

Task Force B, less Battery B, VNMC Artillery Battalion, was airlifted to Saigon under the control of the Joint General Staff, RVN, on 31 January. Battery B remained with the task force rear echelon under control of the ARVN 7th Infantry Division. The 3rd Infantry Battalion relieved the 5th Infantry Battalion and assumed duty in the Capitol Military District on 16 January. After completing a three-month deployment in II Corps Tactical Zone on 22 January, the 4th Infantry Battalion returned to their base camp at Vung Tau. Eight days were spent on equipment rehabilitation and leave and then, on the morning of 31 January, the 4th Infantry Battalion was alerted to move to Tan Son Nhut Air Base under the operational control of the Tan Son Nhut Sensitive Area Command. At 1245 enemy contact was made with an estimated two enemy platoons from the north. The battalion was unable to close the enemy without inflicting excessive civilian casualties; nine civilians were wounded in this action with an estimated 20 enemy killed. At 1630 the 1st and 3rd Companies attacked an armored compound that had

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been overrun by the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army (NVA) troops. The enemy had warned that all civilians would be killed if the compound was attacked and, after the compound was retaken the next day, the Battalion found that the civilians had been murdered, including the Camp Commander, a Lieutenant Colonel, his wife and eight children. An estimated NVA Battalion continued to hold the compound throughout that day despite the Marine attack, Vietnamese Air Force air strikes and U. S. helicopter gunship support. Due to limited ammunition supply and impending darkness the air strikes were halted and the 4th Battalion was ordered to withdraw. Throughout the night of the 31st the Battalion Command Post was under sporadic sniper fire. Enemy casualties were 100 killed that day while friendly casualties were seven killed and 52 wounded.

The 5th Infantry Battalion remained at the base camp at Thu Duc as the Ready Reaction Force for III Corps Tactical Zone from 1 through 9 January. On 10 January the Battalion moved into the Capital Military District. The 5th Battalion was relieved on 16 January by the 3rd Battalion and returned to Thu Duc to prepare for further deployment to II Corps Tactical Zone on 22 January.

The 6th Infantry Battalion remained in the Capital Military District until 11 January when it was airlifted to II Corps Tactical Zone.

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Vietnamese Marine Corps Statistical Summary
January 1968

VC/NVA 254 KIA 35 VIET CONG CAPTURED 133 VIET CONG SUSPECTS

VNMC 68 KIA* 261 WIA (*Includes 2 KIA in non-hostile action)

VNMC Weapons and Equipment Lost:	
Rifle, U. S. M-1	10
Recoilless Rifle, U. S. 57-mm	1
Radio Transmitter, U. S.	2
Weapons Captured:	
Rifle, U. S., M-16	2
Rifle, Russian, AK-47	44
Rifle, Russian, K-5	1
Rifle, U. S., M-1	3
Rifle, NVA, K-50	2
Rifle, U. S. Browning automatic	2
Rifle, U. S., M-14	2
Carbine, U. S., M-1 and M-2	20
Carbine, Russian, 7.62-mm	14
Pistol, ChiCom, 7.62-mm	1
Pistol, Czechoslovakian	17
Light machine gun, ChiCom	12
Submachine gun, U. S., Thompson	4
Rocket launcher, anti-tank, Russian RPG-7	2
Rocket launcher, anti-tank, Russian RPG-2	7
LAAW, U. S., M-22	6
Captured or Destroyed Materials or Facilities:	
Grenades	215
Grenades, anti-tank	321
Mines, 10-kilogram	5
Cluster Bomb-units (CBU)	3
Booby Traps	8
Rounds, assorted small-arms ammunition	2,600
Rounds, 7.62-mm ammunition	10,000
Magazines, miscellaneous ammunition	25
Magazines, AK-47	200
Shovels	80
Sampans	7
Gas Masks	2
Bunkers	5
Handle, anti-aircraft gun	1

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APPENDIX I

RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES

The ministry of the Navy Chaplains in the Republic of Vietnam is indeed a vast one. Anywhere, anytime and whatever the situation, the Navy Chaplains administer to the needs of their men. Religious services are conducted in the splendor of ornate cathedrals and churches in the urban cities, while at the same moment, somewhere in the Delta a worship service is being held in an "EM" Club or a barren warehouse. The following remarks, extracted from an end of tour report prepared by Lieutenant Robert R. FREISTEDT, CHC, USN, a Navy Chaplain who served in South Vietnam from January 1967 to January 1968, best typifies the activities of a combat chaplain.

> To describe and summarize a one year tour of duty in Vietnam is at one time easy and yet difficult. It is easy because one's mission may be stated quite simply as bringing "Christ to men and men to Christ". And yet it is difficult too because it involves so many and such varied situations. This is particularly true in the case of the Assistant Force Chaplain's job on the staff of Commander U. S. Naval Forces, Vietnam. Few assignments even in the civilian parish are as interesting and challenging...
>
> During phase one of the tour, I functioned mainly as a Circuit Rider of Naval Support Activity, Saigon, visiting such bases as Nha Be in the Rung Sat Special Zone, Vinh Long, Sa Dec and Can Tho in the Mekong Delta, and occasionally conducting services at Qui Nhon on the coast in III Corps.
>
> My regular circuit took me to Nha Be on Sunday for regular services in an old warehouse on the Vietnamese

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Naval Base. With bible in hand, altar kit slung over the shoulder and tape recorder at my side, I set out from the Chaplain's Office at NAVSUPPACT. Most weekdays were spent in the Mekong Delta, but occasionally on the sad occasions of a death, I had to go to Nha Be for a Wednesday evening service. It meant staying over in the old warehouse BOQ. But there was something rustic and demanding in this first headquarters of NSA Detachment Nha Be. It welded the men together into a fighting force in those early days. But when the chaplain came during the week, almost instinctively the men knew one of their buddies had "got it", so they gathered to honor him in the old warehouse "chapel". It was a time of deep thought and earnest prayer. It was a time a chaplain drew real close to his men. Before long these were "my" men. Rough and tough and sometimes wild, I loved them. I can remember arriving one morning during a battle on the Long Tau River. The MSBs were being hit hard that February. Helping the wounded off the boat, I spotted one fellow shaking badly, a big six foot two first class petty officer. We went behind a Conex box nearby where he "let it out" and there for the first time I held in my arms a sobbing, shaking man in his early thirties. After it was over he went back on the river and again was "hit". That day he earned the Bronze Star...

Late one afternoon while I was at NAVSUPPACT, Saigon, a phone call came from CDR RABUN (OINC of Nha Be). A medical aid station had been set up in the chowhall and they were expecting wounded to be heloed in any minute... I...jumped in the NAVSUPPACT truck and rode out to Nha Be. As I jumped out of the truck, I realized what the next few hours would be like. The first man I got to was a young Army private. "He's gone", said the medic. I kneeled, touched him and we all bowed our heads in prayer for this young dead G.I. From 1800 to 2400 the wounded kept arriving every fifteen minutes; battered, bloody and mud-soaked they came. Needless to say not one refused that moment of prayer. That night I slept with the wounded and then next day drove several fellows to the hospital in Saigon. Then I went back to the office to meet a counseling appointment--schedules had to be met even in the midst of war.

However, most of my normal week's routine was spent "thumbing" my way through the Delta via CARIBOU (C-7A) or C-123 or helicopter. There was no assigned helo, it was

all TAD travel, "catch as catch can". "Hop aboard, chaplain", they would say and off I'd go to Vinh Long, Can Tho or Sa Dec...

...In Vinh Long at the NSA Detachment...services were often conducted in the club or bar area "for there was no room for them" elsewhere. Contacting and counseling the men had to be done on the job for there was no other time for it. Sometimes a worried sailor had to be told bad news and the only place to do it was right where he worked. Of course, there was a lot of counseling that took place in the club after working hours. The circuit chaplain had no regular office out in the field. His office was most often a table in the club. His hours: 1900 to 2400...

The road between Sa Dec and Vinh Long, like so many other roads in the Mekong Delta, was "insecure", and rivers blocked other roads. Thus most transportation had to be by plane or helo. Though it might take only 15 minutes to travel a distance of 30-40 miles by the air, waiting time and transportation to and from the airport often made it half a day trip or longer.

Of course, to reach the LSTs in the rivers was a job for the Navy helos. Occasionally, you could take a PBR boat to your destination, but that meant 4-6 hours of riding or maybe even a full 12-hour patrol, transferring in mid-stream from boat to boat. Sometimes, luckily, you could catch a Seawolf Gunship (Navy) out to the "T"...

Once aboard the LST the main job was to contact men and get to know them as soon as possible. Normally I had only one day aboard or even just a few hours because I had to visit two other bases and still be back for Sunday services at Nha Be. The best place of course to meet the men was on deck resting after an operation. Occasionally, they might even be getting ready to "shoot" in a fire support operation. This meant that soon I was in the midst of battle, watching as the LST pounded VC bunkers and huts near the river. When there was a pause in the battle or the operation, we went down to the mess decks to conduct services...

Of course, when I returned from my trips to the Delta there was always plenty of counseling and work to do in

the office at Naval Support Activity, Saigon...One of these duties included marriage counseling and religious instruction. I had the unique opportunity to counsel one couple where the Vietnamese girl was Buddhist. She wished to convert to Christianity and so over several weeks I gave her instructions, and then baptized her into the Church. I later blessed their marriage and have since heard from them, happily settled in the states.

Beyond the regular round of duties there was also civic action work to be done with the orphanages. This work took me to the "Children's Home of Blessing", a Chinese Christian orphanage in the Saigon/Cholon area...The home houses about 30 children regularly and provides free schooling for about 150 more from the neighborhood. The surroundings are neat and clean, as the young girls are quick to point out. Of course, part of the real joy of this ministry is to meet and work with the young children of this war-torn land and see them given a fresh start in the world...

Finally, the regular job as Assistant Force Chaplain provided numerous opportunities to travel and meet our various Navy Chaplains in Vietnam... This gave me an opportunity to discuss the circuit riding ministry of our NAVSUPPACT, Saigon Chaplains and also the other fine work of our chaplains in-country...

Thus as one can see, in one year I have traveled the length and breadth of Vietnam, serving as Assistant Force Chaplain for NAVFORV, assisting in NAVSUPPACT Chaplain's Office, circuit riding for NAVSUPPACT, Saigon, working as base chaplain for NSA Detachment Nha Be and also its first Civic Action Officer...

However, best of all the assignments and most special was that time of worship with men like those at Nha Be. Tough men of the SEAL team, Seawolf pilots, PBR men or base support personnel all joined in prayer that soon peace would come to this land and our world. That was the "best" assignment to "bring Christ to men and men to Christ". It has been a wonderful tour in many ways, but whatever else I have done, that mission has given it all meaning and direction.

Chaplain Robert R. FREISTEDT, USN, (second from left), conducts a Bible study in front of the base chapel at Nha Be. Other participants are, from left to right, LT Anthony WATSON, USN, GMG1 Edward PROVOST, USN, SA Irwin E. MOORE, USN, and LT(jg) Carl MULLEN, USN.

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APPENDIX II

GLOSSARY

ANGLICO	Air-Naval Gunfire Liaison Company (U. S.).
ARVN	Army of the Republic of Vietnam.
CG	Coastal Group (VNN) - A coastal patrol command consisting of six to ten junks with the responsibility of patrolling from 30 to 60 miles of coastline.
CIDG	Civilian Irregular Defense Group (VN) - Paramilitary troops used in their local area for limited area operations.
CHIEU HOI	"Open Arms" (VN) - The Republic of Vietnam's amnesty program of rehabilitation and re-location of Viet Cong who voluntarily return to government control.
CORDS	Civil Operations for Revolutionary Development Support.
COSURVFOR	Coastal Surveillance Force (USN) TF 115 - The U. S. forces participating in Operations MARKET TIME and STABLE DOOR.
COSVN	Central Office for South Vietnam - The highest Viet Cong headquarters in South Vietnam.
CTZ	Corps Tactical Zone - The major divisions of South Vietnam into military regions.

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DAI DOAN KET	National Reconciliation Program - Program which is aimed at helping qualified returnees find employment commensurate with their previous training and experience.
GAME WARDEN	The operation performed by U. S. Navy forces to interdict Viet Cong movement on the major waterways of the Mekong Delta and the RSSZ. The force is composed of River Patrol Boats, Minesweepers, helicopter fire teams and SEAL teams.
HEAT	High Explosive Anti-Tank - A shaped-charge projectile with high armor penetration capability normally used in 57-mm or 75-mm recoilless rifles.
HHFT	Heavy Helicopter Fire Team (U. S.) - A helicopter fire team with three or more gunships used in support of ground and water-borne units. The use of three helicopters allows continuous firing on the target.
HOI CHANH	"Returnee to the Just Cause" (VN) - An individual (Viet Cong) who returns under the Chieu Hoi program.
IUWU	Inshore Undersea Warfare Unit (U. S.) - The U. S. forces conducting Operation STABLE DOOR.
IWCS	Integrated Wideband Communication System.
LDNN	Lien Doc Nguoi Nhia (VNN) - Literally "soldiers

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who fight under the sea." UDT force of the VNN.

LHFT — Light Helicopter Fire Team (U. S.) - A helicopter fire team composed of two gunships used in support of ground and waterborne units.

LRRP — Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol.

MARKET TIME — The operation conducted by U. S. and Vietnamese naval forces to interdict Viet Cong infiltration of men and supplies from the sea.

MEDCAP — Medical Civic Action Program.

MG — Machine Gun - An automatic, crew-served weapon adaptable to many mountings. The four types currently used by USN and VNN forces are the M-60, the .30 caliber light machine gun, the .50 caliber heavy machine gun, and the 7.62-mm mini-gun.

MILPHAP — Military Provincial Health Assistance Program - MILPHAP teams, normally staffed by three doctors, a Medical Service Corps officer and 12 corpsmen, work with Vietnam's Ministry of Health at the province hospital level to improve health services available to Vietnamese civilians.

MRF — Mobile Riverine Force (U. S.) - A force made up of Navy craft and Army units designed and trained for amphibious assaults in the Mekong Delta and the RSSZ.

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NGFS	Naval Gunfire Support (USN-VNN) - Naval gunfire used to assist operations ashore; often spotted and corrected by spotter aircraft or forward observers.
NILO	Naval Intelligence Liaison Officer.
NLF	National Liberation Front - Actually the "National Front for the Liberation of South Vietnam." A Communist political-front used to give the appearance of popular non-Communist support to thier insurgency activities in South Vietnam.
NUOC MAM	(VN) A fermented fish sauce served with almost any dish. A national delicacy.
NVA	North Vietnamese Army.
PRU	Provincial Reconnaissance Unit (VN) - Para-military personnel whose principal mission includes clandestine operations designed to destroy the Viet Cong infrastructure. Each unit consists of one or more teams of 18 to 20 civilians who have had prior military service.
RAF	Riverine Assault Force (USN) - The U. S. Navy contingent of the MRF.
RAG	River Assault Group (VN) - An amphibious warfare command with the capability to transport and support a battalion of infantry. Similar to a boat

division in the RAF.

RED HAZE — Infra Red Detector (U. S.) - Sensitive heat detectors used as an airborne locator of personnel, equipment and military sites.

RF — Regional Force (VN) - Forces under ARVN control which operate within their home province.

RIVPATFOR — River Patrol Force (USN) TF 116 - The forces used in conducting Operation GAME WARDEN.

RPG — Rocket Propelled Grenade - A Soviet or Chinese Communist-manufactured, fin-stabilized, anti-tank grenade. RPG-2 (B-40). RPG-7 (B-41).

RSSZ — Rung Sat Special Zone - Literally "forest of assasins." A special military area located about 21 miles southeast of Saigon in Gia Dinh Province and composed of Can Gio and Quang Xuyen districts.

RVNAF — Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces - Consists of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps and RF/PF.

SEAL — Sea, Air, Land. (USN) - Special duty personnel qualified as underwater demolition, paratroop and jungle warfare specialists.

SECRET ZONE — A Viet Cong-dominated area utilized as a base, training camp and logistic resupply area.

SLAR — Side-Looking Airborne Radar (U. S.) - An accurate

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	airborne radar for detecting small, moving objects.
STABLE DOOR	The U. S. Navy operation conducted to provide harbor defense.
STAR LIGHT	Ambient light equipment (USN) - A portable system to enhance vision under conditions of starlight or moonlight.
UDT	Underwater Demolition Team (USN) - Specially trained swimmers used for underwater work in the Navy.
USAID	United States Agency for International Development.
USSF	United States Special Forces (USA) - Army personnel specially trained for use as advisors to indigenous personnel.
VIET CONG	Vietnamese citizens under the control and leadership of North Vietnam. These persons may be local sympathizers, guerrillas, or hard-core, full-time workers for the Communist domination of South Vietnam.
VNAF	Vietnamese Air Force.
VNMC	Vietnamese Marine Corps.
VNN	Vietnamese Navy.

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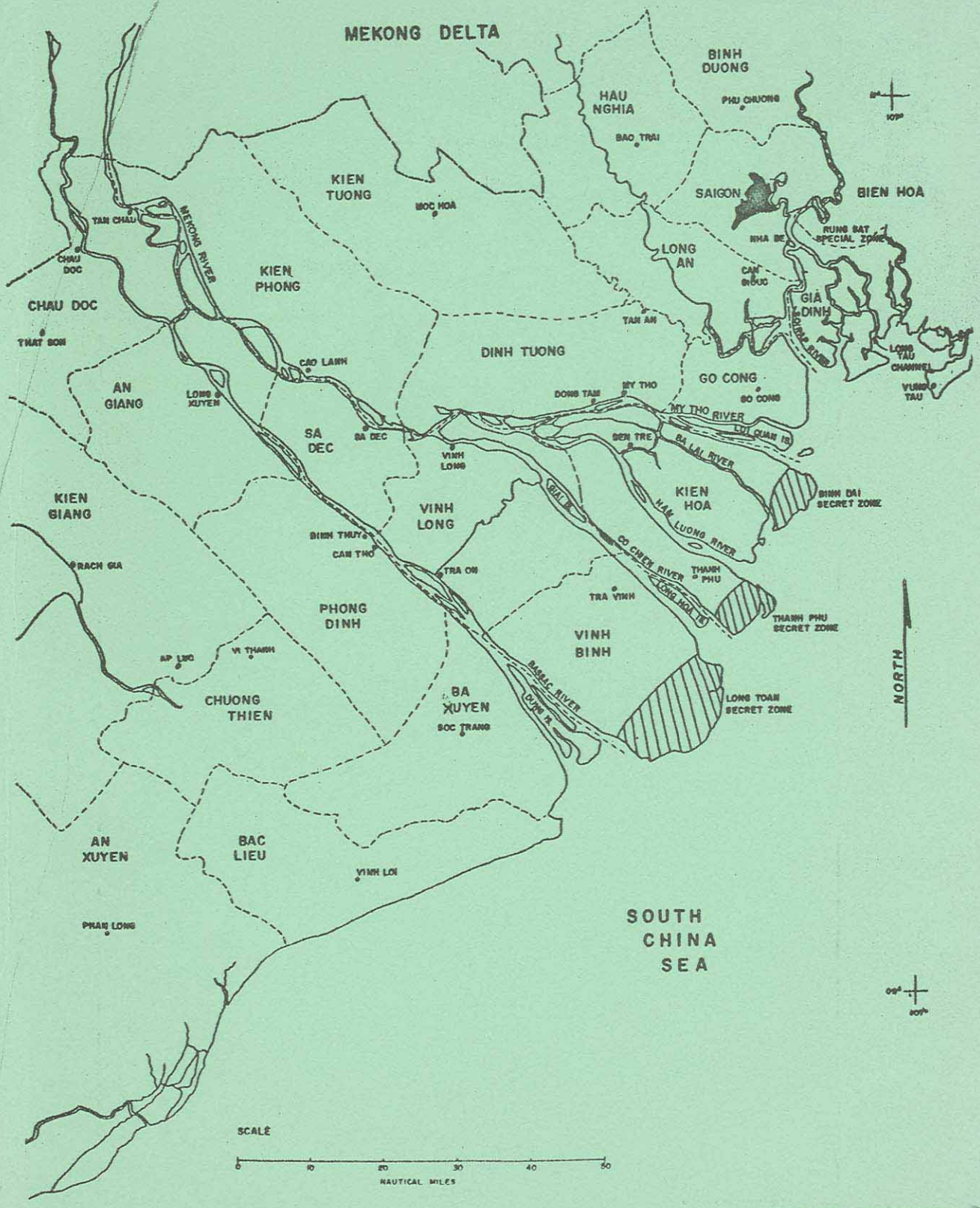

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To: Commander in Chief U. S. Pacific Fleet (Code 12)

Subj: U. S. Naval Forces, Vietnam Monthly Historical Summary, January 1968; submission of

Ref: (a) CINCPACFLT ltr FF1-1 5750 ser 1/6925 of 2 October 1967

Encl: (1) Coastal Surveillance Force Summary
(2) River Patrol Force Summary
(3) Riverine Assault Force Summary
(4) Naval Advisory Group Summary
(5) Selected Psychological Operations
(6) USN Statistical Summary
(7) VNN/VNMC Statistical Summary
(8) USN Civic Action Statistical Summary

1. In accordance with reference (a), enclosures (1) through (8) are submitted.

2. The data contained in enclosures (6), (7) and (8) are based on information available this date and are subject to revisions as later information is received. Any adjustments of this nature will be reflected in January's Historical Supplement.

S. T. ORME
Chief of Staff

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COASTAL SURVEILLANCE FORCE SUMMARY
January 1968

During January there was an increase in Operation MARKET TIME activity as the heavy seas and inclement weather associated with the northeast monsoon season abated in the northern coastal zones, thus allowing all MARKET TIME stations to be manned throughout a high percentage of the period. MARKET TIME units detected 48,856 junks and sampans during the month, an increase of 14,265 over December's total. Meanwhile, MARKET TIME units were engaged in 18 hostile fire incidents and conducted 152 naval gunfire support missions during the month. The majority of the gunfire support missions were fired in the Third and Fourth Coastal Zones where fair weather prevailed throughout the month.

On the 2nd of the month USCGC ANDROSCOGGIN (WHEC 68) carried out a gunfire mission against an enemy position approximately 30 miles north-northeast of Ca Mau Point in the Gulf of Thailand. Responding to corrections transmitted by an airborne observer, the cutter destroyed two structures and four sampans, damaged nine structures and six sampans, and killed two enemy troops and wounded three others.

On 3 January PCF 9 received hostile automatic weapons fire while on patrol approximately eight miles northeast of Ca Mau Point. While closing the beach to return and suppress the fire, one U. S. Navy crewman sufferred a bullet wound in the right thigh. The hostile fire was suppressed and the Swift boat's guns killed one Viet Cong and wounded several others.

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At 1723 on 7 January, PCF 63 sighted four people on the beach near a deserted village approximately 22 miles south of Qui Nhon. As the Swift boat approached, the people turned and fled into the village. Sector authorities granted permission to take the area under fire, and the Swift boat commenced firing on the large house that the evading personnel were seen to enter. This building and four other surrounding structures were completely destroyed by the PCF's firing.

On the 18th of January, USCGC BERING STRAIT (WHEC 382) took an estimated enemy company under fire approximately 28 miles north-northeast of Ca Mau Point on the Gulf of Thailand coast. Utilizing her five-inch guns and responding to corrections transmitted by an airborne spotter, the cutter destroyed two structures and one sampan, damaged six structures, killed six Viet Cong, and wounded four others.

At 0250 on the 31st, a Cam Ranh Bay harbor defense patrol succeeded in surfacing the first of two enemy swimmers captured on that day. Approximately one half hour later an explosion occurred on the bow of the anchored Norweigan tanker PELICAN causing moderate damage. Initial interrogation of the swimmer indicated that additional swimmers were in the Cam Ranh Bay area operating as three man teams.

In response to the heavy fighting which erupted throughout Vietnam during the last days of the month, MARKET TIME units continually aided allied forces with gunfire support, and all units maintained alert aggressive patrols.

A summary of calendar year 1967 MARKET TIME activity includes:

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RIVER PATROL FORCE SUMMARY
January 1968

The New Year's Truce Period (311800H December - 020600H January) was violated when the Viet Cong initiated an attack, early on the morning of 2 January, against the NSA Detachment Nha Be, support base for GAME WARDEN PBRs and minesweepers. One MSB was destroyed and two U. S. Navymen were wounded in the recoilless-rifle attack directed at the Navy pier facilities. As the PBRs continued to interdict enemy river crossings, the Viet Cong retaliated by intensifying their firepower by employing heavier weapons in an effort to disrupt the patrols. In greater evidence was the increased use of rocket, rifle-grenade, recoilless-rifle and heavy automatic-weapons fire from ambushes in an attempt to destroy the boats. The intensified attacks killed one PBR sailor, wounded 36 others and wounded one Department of the Navy civilian. As a result of the stepped up activity of the Viet Cong, prior to the celebration of TET, the Vietnamese Lunar New Year (celebrated during the period 30 January - 2 February), GAME WARDEN units suffered the highest monthly casualty total to date. However, the enemy suffered high losses as Operation GAME WARDEN continued to deny the Viet Cong the free use of the waterways of the RSSZ and the Delta. In I CTZ, PBR operations commenced on 9 January in the Cau Hai Bay/Tan My area. River Squadron 521, operating from PBR Mobile Support Base I located at Tan My (50 miles north of Danang) was assigned patrol responsibilities. This is the

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913,121 wooden-hull detections, 538,054 wooden-hull boardings/inspections, and 8,743 steel-hull detections.

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second time the PBRs were assigned to I CTZ. On 10 January a Viet Cong swimmer wearing sophisticated diving equipment was detected on the upper Co Chien River. This was the first sighting in IV CTZ of a swimmer so equipped. CTF 116 conducted Operation PREAKNESS III on 10-11 January along the Ba Lai River, in Kien Hoa province, an area of high Viet Cong activity. ASPBs teamed up with PBRs and transitted the river and destroyed 24 sampans, 34 huts and 20 bunkers. On 11 January, SEALs were landed shortly after a PBR patrol was ambushed on the Bassac River. Operation QUICK KILL, a quick reaction ground attack to counter enemy attacks, accounted for five Viet Cong KIA and the capture of three recoilless weapons and associated ammunition. One SEAL was killed and another wounded in the action. On 25 January Operation WIND SONG I was conducted in the Thom Creek and Mo Cay Creek vicinity of Mo Cay in Kien Hoa province. The operation netted 51 Viet Cong suspects. In addition, 50 bunkers, 40 structures and five tons of rice were destroyed and five pounds of documents of high intelligence value was captured. During the TET holiday period BOLD DRAGON I was conducted on the upper Bassac River. On 29 January PBRs commenced patrols from Chau Doc to the Cambodian border to prevent a possible Viet Cong movement/re-supply effort during the TET Truce period (291800H - 310600H). The TET Truce period was terminated, however, at 0945H 30 January, due to numerous Viet Cong-initiated attacks throughout South Vietnam. In the early morning hours of 31 January the Viet Cong launched numerous attacks against military and civilian

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installations. TF 116 units reacted to numerous outposts, ground units and civilian populated areas under fire during the Viet Cong offensive exacting their toll of enemy casualties. Navy armed helicopters once again displayed their merit as they continued to support PBR and SEAL operations. On one occasion the "Seawolves" killed 17 Viet Cong and wounded 23, when they attacked and disrupted a high level Viet Cong meeting on 10 January near the mouth of the Ba Lai River.

At 0105 on the morning of 2 January, the Viet Cong initiated a 75-mm recoilless-rifle attack against the NSA Detachment Nha Be, located seven miles south of Saigon, and commercial POL facilities located close to the Navy base. As the general alarm sounded, units of TG 116.2 got underway, however, MSB 22 was hit and caught fire in the initial barrage directed against the pier area. Two Navymen were wounded slightly in the attack. The MSB was heavily damaged and subsequently stricken from the Naval Vessel Register. The POL facilities received about 20 rounds of enemy fire and sustained hits on four tanks. There was no secondary explosions or fire and only minor damage.

A PBR patrol interdicted and captured a Viet Cong sampan on 3 January, eight miles from the mouth of the Ham Luong River as it attempted to cross the river. The two occupants of the sampan jumped overboard when sighted by the patrol, leaving the motor running. The two occupants were taken under fire with unknown results. PBR 103 captured the boat with a grapnel as the patrol received enemy automatic fire from the river

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bank. PBR 103 cleared the area with the sampan in tow as the cover boat suppressed the enemy fire. The sampan contained 60 bangalor mines, 40 claymore mines, 200 electric primers, 150 rounds of CHICOM ammunition and six fragmentation grenades.

On 8 January a PBR conducting a test firing mission on the upper Dong Tranh River, five miles east-southeast of Nha Be, was hit by an RPG-7 round on the after .50 caliber gun shield. Seven U. S. Navymen and one civilian from NRDU-V Saigon, who was observing the test, were wounded. The following day PBR 722, operating on the Bassac River 11 miles southeast of Can Tho, was struck by a B-41 rocket. The boat withdrew from the area when the stricken boat and its cover boat were unable to suppress the enemy fire. PBR 722 had to beach to prevent from sinking. "Seawolves" and additional PBRs from Binh Thuy arrived on the scene to assist in the fire fight and escort the damaged boat back to its base at Binh Thuy. Seven PBR sailors were wounded in the action. One Viet Cong was killed and one CHICOM rifle was found in the ambush area that contained numerous blood trails. On the 10th, four more PBR sailors were wounded when two more boats on the Bassac were hit by enemy rocket fire.

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RIVERINE ASSAULT FORCE SUMMARY
January 1968

Throughout the month of January the Mobile Riverine Force operating from Dong Tam conducted a series of rapid reaction and search and destroy operations in Dinh Tuong, Vinh Long, Long An and Kien Hoa provinces. The MRF continued its vigorous pursuit of the elusive enemy main force battalions by penetrating into the heavily infested Viet Cong domains of central and western Dinh Tuong province. The enemy response to this saturation tactic has been to retire into the northern areas of Dinh Tuong province which were considered inaccessible due to low bridge clearances and massive canal obstructions.

During the 36-hour New Year's Truce period (311800H Dec-020600H Jan), the troops in the field were not engaged in any significant contact, although they received some automatic-weapons fire on 1 January while in interdictory positions along the Ba Rai Stream. On 7-8 January the MRF conducted a two-battalion search and destroy operation in the Don Nhon district of Vinh Long province where they established heavy contact with the enemy. Navy riverine units also came under heavy automatic-weapons fire from numerous positions along the Co Luong waterways. The assault forces maintained continual contact with the Viet Cong for six hours and during the ensuing battle killed 28 of the fiercely resisting insurgents. Cumulative enemy casualties consisted of 30 Viet Cong killed. There were eight U. S. soldiers and two sailors wounded in the two-day operation. On 10 January, after a brief

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maintenance period, the MRF commenced a riverine search and destroy operation in the Cai Be district of Dinh Tuong province. RAD 91 and RAD 111, with elements of the 3/60th and 4/47th Infantry Battalions embarked, maneuvered single file up the narrow Tra Lot Stream, which is navigable only at high tide, and landed their troops. The riverine craft were then withdrawn into the deeper Thong Lui Stream and Mekong River. Meanwhile Alfa Company of the 3/60th Infantry Battalion, which had been airlifted into the objective area, became isolated by intense enemy fire and suffered heavy losses, with one man killed and 32 wounded. Pinned down and short of ammunition and supplies during the night, the Army units lost 21 killed and had 59 men wounded. The enemy lost 73 men in the bitterly contested battle. On 12 January, after a six-hour respite, the MRF, in response to an intelligence report of a large Viet Cong buildup in the Binh Phuoc district of Long An province, proceeded to the new objective area. Initial contact was made as riverine units of RAD 111 were preparing to land troops and were ambushed from the banks of the Vam Co Tay River, about 11 miles northwest of Go Cong. The enemy fire, consisting of B-40 rockets, recoilless-rifle and automatic-weapons fire, was suppressed with flame throwers, 40-mm, 20-mm, rifle grenades and .50 caliber machine guns and the landing was conducted without further incident. There were seven Viet Cong killed and 44 bunkers destroyed in the two-day operation. There were no U. S. personnel or material casualties during this rapid-reaction operation. On 18 January

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while participating in Operation CORONADO X (18-19 January), the commanding officer of UDT 12 was killed, when the ATC, T-112-1, in which he was embarked, was struck by two RPG-2 (B-40) rocket rounds at the confluence of the Ben Tre and Ong Buong Streams about six miles southeast of Ben Tre in the Giong Trom district of Kien Hoa province. On 24 January YTB 785 was hit by an RPG-7 rocket on the My Tho River about 5 miles west of Dong Tam. The attack caused minor damage to the tug and slightly wounded one Navyman and one Vietnamese interpreter.

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NAVAL ADVISORY GROUP SUMMARY
January 1968

During the month the Fleet Command had a daily average of 25.4 ships available and a daily average of 21.8 ships employed. At the same time the Coastal Force employed a daily average of 167.5 junks of a daily average of 191.4 available, and the River Assault Groups employed a daily average of 129.1 of the 149.8 craft available. Meanwhile, the Vietnamese Marine Corps' six infantry and one artillery battalions were committed to operations 95 percent of the time. While Task Force A, in II CTZ, and the 5th and 6th Battalions, in the Capital Military District, made light contact with the enemy, Task Force B, operating west of My Tho, made heavy contact with the enemy on the 1st and 2nd and on the 19th and 20th.

The 1st and 2nd Battalions partially surrounded the Viet Cong 261st Main Force Battalion during an operation 26 miles west of Dong Tam on the 1st. The close contact, small-unit battle ended on the 2nd when the enemy dispersed and evaded to the north leaving 85 of their number on the field; eight others were captured, 14 suspects were detained, and 71 weapons were seized. The Marines had 28 killed and 83 wounded. On the night of the 19th at least three companies of the enemy's 261st or 261B Battalion attacked the positions of the 1st Battalion and Battery B, 15 miles west of Dong Tam. The combined mortar, rocket and infantry attack was beaten back by the Marines and U. S. Army helicopter gunships and

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50th Regiment and RAG 27, along the Vam Co Dong River 15 miles southwest of Saigon. The sweeps killed one North Vietnamese soldier and 52 insurgents, captured two others and detained two suspects; twelve individual weapons were seized. Three ARVN soldiers were killed, 25 were wounded and five others are missing; there were no VNN casualties. About 0400 on the 20th, Coastal Group 11 junks, patrolling on the Cua Viet River, supported Dai Loc hamlet with machine gun and mortar fire and directed U. S. Marine artillery fire into the positions of the Viet Cong forces attacking the hamlet. Coastal Group 11 and USMC reaction forces were met by an estimated four companies of the enemy. By 1400 the outnumbered sailors were forced to withdraw south to the river while the Marines, to the east, were able to hold their positions until the enemy retreated. Thirty Viet Cong were killed by the sailors in the engagement and one man rallied under the Chieu Hoi program. Four VNN sailors were killed and 16 others and the two U. S. enlisted advisors were wounded. During the following two days, one junk was damaged by 57-mm recoilless-rifle fire and eight mines were detonated in the Cua Viet in the vicinity of Dai Loc hamlet, sinking one U. S. Navy LCM-8 and damaging three LCUs, one LCM-6, one LCM-8 and one civilian craft. Seven Vietnamese were killed, four sailors were wounded and two men from the sunk LCM-8 are missing in the incidents.

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PSYCHOLOGICAL AND CIVIC ACTION OPERATIONS
January 1968

The 1968 TET Campaign began on 1 January with the distribution of printed material designed to instill a desire for unity under the National Government. U. S. Navy units made loudspeaker broadcasts providing entertainment, news and Chieu Hoi appeals throughout the Coastal and Riverine areas. The TET holiday season (30 January through 1 February) provided a significant opportunity for psychological exploitation as this is a time of family reunions. During the month the USS LUZERNE COUNTY (LST 902), a logistical support ship operating in IV CTZ, performed broadcasts as it transitted the Mekong and Bassac Rivers. This is the first time that a broadcast from a large U. S. ship had been made in the Delta. On 22 January, two junks from Coastal Group 37 received heavy automatic-weapons fire as a Vietnamese Navyman made a live broadcast in Kien Hoa province.

Navy units continued to perform MEDCAPs and Civic Action projects throughout the country in addition to their primary mission of prosecuting the war. Each Coastal Group in the Third Coastal Zone has assumed a civic action project as the program continues to improve. Fifteen tons of soap received from CARE was supplied to the Coastal Zone Advisors and PBR River Sections for distribution to the poor and needy villagers along the coast and in the Delta. On 4 January, the Viet Cong ambushed four PBRs that had just completed a MEDCAP in Ton Duong village,

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5 miles northwest of Sa Dec, wounding two members of a PF security force. The enemy fire was suppressed and PBR personnel extinguished fires started in the village by Viet Cong grenades. In the RSSZ, River Section 542 continued to support a village that they adopted last September. The River Section provides Tan Thanh village with a monthly MEDCAP and shoes, clothing and toys. The majority of the material presented to the village is received from a Sacramento Kiwanis Club. The "can do" Seabees continue their splendid efforts to aid and teach the villagers and refugees so that they might be able to proudly say that they too can say "can do".

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USAF flareships. Thirty-seven Viet Cong were killed in the battle while the Marines had 20 men killed, 66 wounded and one man missing. Villagers along the enemy's escape route reported that 40 sampans bearing dead or wounded Viet Cong passed during the morning of the 20th.

On the 7th, Coastal Group 22 detained 71 Viet Cong suspects and seized one carbine while participating with an ARVN company from Binh Dinh, in a search just north of Qui Nhon. The soldiers captured six Viet Cong, detained 572 suspects and seized two automatic weapons and 138 pistols, 300,000$ VN ($2,542.00), $265.00 US and a large quantity of foodstuffs. At 0010 on the 9th, a Coastal Group 43 reconnaissance team, aboard a junk, killed 18 Viet Cong, and wounded or killed several others who were carried away, when the junk was ambushed from the bank of the Cai Lon River three miles downstream from the base at Kien An. The following day, the 10th, two enemy base camps in the RSSZ were destroyed by a combined force under the control of the RSSZ Commander. U. S. Army spotter aircraft located the camps and directed Regional Force troops embarked in RAG 22 craft to them. U. S. Army and Navy helicopter fire teams provided area cover and close support to the troops and an ARVN 105-mm battery fired into the enemy area as the troops departed. Six Viet Cong were killed, five individual weapons were seized and two camps containing 12 buildings, two sampans and four tons of rice were destroyed in the 10-hour operation. On 19 January Operation AN DAN 16/68, to reduce the enemy presence in Ben Luc district, was conducted by the ARVN

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USN STATISTICAL SUMMARY
January 1968

	MARKET TIME	GAME WARDEN	Mobile Riverine Force
Detections	48,856	74,398	*
Inspections	22,226	16,390	*
Boardings	11,312	41,411	*
Craft detained	1	*	0
Persons detained	318	*	416
Viet Cong suspects	3	*	*
Hostile fire incidents	18	*	*
Enemy casualties:			
a. Killed	36(26 prob)	117	114
b. Wounded	11	32	3
c. Captured	0	33	24
USN casualties:			
a. Killed	0	2	1
b. Wounded	3	61	8
c. Captured	0	0	0
d. Missing	0	0	0
Enemy material losses:			
a. Destroyed:			
(1) Junks or sampans	23	155	2
(2) Structures	28	320	221
b. Captured:			
(1) Junks or sampans	1	8	0
(2) Weapons	0	22	124**
(3) Ammunition (rounds)	0	*	381
(4) Rice (tons)	0	6.5	2.7
c. Damaged:			
(1) Junks or sampans	19	142	*
(2) Structures	58	75	2
USN material losses:			
a. Destroyed:			
(1) Surface craft	0	1(MSB)	0
(2) Helicopters	0	0	0
b. Damaged:			
(1) Surface craft	1	20	3
(2) Helicopters	0	6	0
SAR missions	5	0	0

Remarks:

* Information not applicable or not available this date.

** Includes hand grenades.

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VNN/VNMC STATISTICAL SUMMARY
January 1968

VIETNAMESE NAVY:*

COASTAL FORCE	Searched Junks	Searched People	Detained Junks	Detained People
I NZ	12,414	33,122	0	62
II NZ	8,239	22,513	4	126
III NZ	7,953	31,145	0	0
IV NZ	3,949	10,546	0	0
Sub-totals	32,555	97,326	4	188
FLEET COMMAND PATROL SHIPS***	1,003	4,152	2	0
RIVERINE AREA CRAFT	4,927	15,581	2	7
TOTALS	38,485	117,059	8	195

VIETNAMESE MARINE CORPS:**

VC/NVA: 154 KIA 35 CAPTURED 68 SUSPECTS DETAINED

VNMC: 59 KIA 208 WIA 1 MIA

Remarks:

* 1 to 30 January

** 1 to 28 January

*** Conducted 42 gunfire support missions during November.

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USN CIVIC ACTION STATISTICAL SUMMARY
January 1968*

PROGRAMS:

	Man Days	Expenditures (VN$)
Economic Development	25	2,500
Education	440	82,774
Social Welfare	1,155	1,375,921
Transportation	102	111,020
Refugee Assistance Support	138	1,500
TOTALS	1,860	1,573,715

VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS: VN$ 102,942

US/FWMAF ASSISTANCE TO GVN PROGRAMS:

	Number	Type of Assistance
Market Place	1	Material
Latrine	1	Technical Advice

INSTITUTES ASSISTED:

	Number
Hospitals/dispensaries	42
Schools	13
Orphanages	4
Others	4

PERCENT OF U. S. CIVIC ACTION PROJECTS CONDUCTED JOINTLY WITH:

	Percent
Other FWMAF	5.4
RVNAF	3.0
U. S. civilian voluntary agencies	7.3
Average percent of self-help by VN civilians	43.0

Remarks:

* Reporting period is 26 December 1967 - 25 January 1968. This is the new format for the USN Civic Action Statistical Summary.

Enclosure (8)